

SANTA'S BEST TOYS

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MAKING AMERICA GRATE

Canada gets on the nerves of the Bush White House. Will Paul Martin fix that?

ONE THING TO KNOW about most Americans: if you ask what they think of Canada, the truth is that they don't. For them, we're neither a state nor a state of mind, but rather a large, chilly, barren entity to the north that occasionally sends them hockey players, maple syrup, a few flower daisies, and some really messy weather. Most of the time, Americans ignore us as irrelevant noise blown for Canadians, because (with the notable exception

of the 1812 war), they mean us no harm. On the odd occasion when Americans do consider us, they tend to describe us as nice, well-meaning and, well, just like them.

McPaul Martin's rudeness, as John Gruden wrote (page 24), is no more out of office in one of the few times when many of those suppositions don't apply. In theory, improving relations with the world's most powerful nation should be easy: anyone, to the George W. Bush administration, would be an improvement on John Gruden. So will Martin have to do upon becoming PM is to go to the White House and say nice things about the United States—or, for that matter, stay home and do the same—and relations will improve.

It's not that simple, for reasons that concern the dynamics of politics of both countries. Start with Bush, who doesn't know or care much about Canada (forming the final year of this term of office, he will have made the short hop to Ottawa to visit). George Bush Sr. was a friend of Canada; his son isn't. On the other of America's traditional best friends, George Brown, Mexico and even Australia rank much higher in his affections. And the fact that Bush knows about Canada—about our stance on Iraq, or social issues such as the legalization of gay marriage and decriminalization of marijuana possession—emanates from his A-to-Z, to the surprise of even some Republicans, appointment as made man. And heading into a massively divisive election year in the U.S., he'll be more focused than ever on domestic issues—and even less interested in a neighbor that he sees as both inconsequential and annoying.

As for Martin, the fact that he thinks more warmly of the U.S. than Christian does isn't exactly setting the bar high. Despite his business background, Martin is out of sync with most CBCs in that his cynicism of the U.S.

George Bush Sr. was a friend of Canada; his son isn't. And the little that the President does know about us annoys him

isn't as the leadership convention, where delegates sat on their hands when Christian praised the United States, then erupted into a sustained applause when he recalled his decision to keep Canadian troops out of Iraq. The two most prominent names in Canadian politics are those who think everything the U.S. does is wrong—and, at the other extreme, the fewing group who think it isn't. So any wrong. Of our last two long-serving prime ministers, Chrétien was too comfortable around the former camp, and Brian Mulroney too close to the latter. Is there a third way to deal with the U.S.—in the final but frank manner that characterizes the very best friendships? That depends, of course, on what Americans really think of us—at a time when ignorance no longer brings bliss.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

magnum@magnum.ca or comments on the Editors' Letter

MAGLEAN'S

Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful People

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2004/2005 Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful People



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"Yes, *Trailer Park Boys* is rude and crude, but it's all part of the charm. I don't think the show is for everyone, but it's definitely for me." —**AMELIA BROWN, Comox, B.C.**

Trash talking

I thoroughly enjoyed "TV's bad boys" (Cover, Nov. 24) on the *Trailer Park Boys*. I have been a TPB fan for all three seasons and it's so nice to see they are finally getting the recognition they deserve. We watch it without fail every Sunday and are always guaranteed a laugh. It's great noise and heard as a small-town Canadian show is taking off so well. Bubbles rules!

Kristy Whitwell, Winnipeg

I am surprised at the garbage that is appearing on TV in recent years. *The Sopranos*, *The O.C.*, *Trailer Park Boys*, just to name a few. We have really stooped pretty low in life if you find humour in a bunch of jerks spewing out foul words. Decency seems to be a thing of the past. It is getting difficult to find anything good to watch anymore. In a very short time we will have hardcore porn coming into our living rooms. **Jim McInerney, Burlington, Ont.**

Trailer Park Boys is the most disgusting show ever unleashed on society. This is what starts common in our world (gangs, drugs, violence, etc.). Many people complain how society is unsafe and wonder how we can improve it, but with this TV show, come on. What are they thinking?

Dustin Malizia, Hamilton

How unfortunate in an article comparing the newest faces of Canadian comedy to one of our lesser-known talents, Will Sasso, labelled as an American. Will Sasso was born and raised in Ladner, B.C., and though he achieved fame on Fox's *MAATV*, he recently returned home to host the CBC's *Will Sasso's Alternative Comedy Hour*. Maybe the observation is worse than we thought!

Wayne Macleod, Vancouver

Suffer the little children

Regarding your excellent article "Sad little girls" (*Investigation*, Nov. 24), it should be noted that a steady undercurrent in that kind of exploitation is racism—white North Americans and European ideologies can



not, and will not, see their victims as people. That someone's lust can override the heart-rending sight of an eight-year-old and teenage-old standing in soiled pajamas as a filthy mattress points to a set of deplorably racist cultural attitudes. In a world where everything is reduced to a commodity with a price tag, and the whispers of colonialism and imperialism still echo, it's not enough to take away a people's economic power and social autonomy—we have to take their children too.

John Cooper, Whiteby, Ont.

It is a tragic world where girls barely out of the womb are available for sex and men are so degenerate that they could patronize

Crude TV | Some love it foul, others simply can't stomach it

Count Amy Chaffetz on the radio side when it came to *Trailer Park Boys*. "Talk about trash TV!" she yelled from Hamilton. "Some parents actually allow their children to watch this crap. It amazes me that there are 100,000 viewers per episode. Do people really have nothing better to do with their time?" This show should be off the air and the scripts should be thrown in the trash."

them. To solve the problem, hunger has to be eliminated from this planet: people have to eat and a hungry person will do anything for food. Pushing either party may help us feel good but it does not work. To solve this and many other tragic situations, the available resources per capita have to increase substantially. For this to happen the population must decline significantly and the available resources must multiply. I have no idea how to achieve this. But I do know that if humans don't find the solution, then nature will. And nature will be much kinder—or at least more merciful—than humans.

Suzette Allen, Calgary

So you say Canada is among 192 countries that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in an effort, among other things, to prevent sexual exploitation of children? How, then, do you explain the refusal of Martin Cauchon, minister of "justice" at the time, and the federal Liberals, to implement legislation that would raise the age of sexual consent in Canada from the current 14 to 16 years of age?

Edward Kennedy, Vancouver, B.C.

It's not enough to try to salvage a few girls in centres to be checked and trained. Just pass laws that any man caught with a female under 18 will be surgically castrated on a first offence. We'll deal with the female, 18-years-and-up problem later. Where's Lorenz Babbie when we need her?

Rita Parker, Calgary, Ont.

The child sex trade is a reality that cannot be ignored, whether it's in Asia or here in North America. Susan McClelland's article is a step forward in ending the silence on this wicked crime on the lives of children. If we participate in the silence, then we participate in the crime.

Andre-Sophie Desrois, Ottawa

Venomous remarks

Ben Berthone's article "Men of the deep" (*Books*, Nov. 24) was excellent, however his knowledge of venomous animals is definitely not shipshape. He mentioned that the platypus is the only mammal that produces venom. This is not correct. In fact, here in Ontario we have our very own mortal mammal. The short-tailed shrew, or *Blarina brevicauda*, is quite venomous. It is approximately the size of a common mouse

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and can often be found in gardens. Hopefully because won't take the isolation of the short-circuited skrew for granted next time he comes across one in his garden.

Nicklas Bailey-Smith, North Green, Ont.

As a long-time admirer of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson and their world, I was pleased to see a quotation from Vincent van Gogh's sonnet "22/39" in your article about Patrick O'Brien. However, you describe Starnes as an American writer, when he was, in fact, born in Toronto in 1886. He moved to America in an early age, but friends of Holmes in this country recognized of the leading figures of the Sherlockian movement.

Brian Roddy, Ashcroft, B.C.

Boomer capitulation

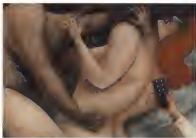
I don't think I can stand to hear one more boomer reminiscence of the 1960s ("Twenty years after JFK," Maclean's on the Record, Nov. 24). When I look at the satires generation today, I see so-called activists turned corporate raiders, shaking our cities with their oversized SUVs, scrambling for nominations at the inner fusion-culture restaurant or embracing the latest anti-aging fad. I see a vain, greedy, unhappy group of people.

Peter Court-Hamilton, Toronto

Much like every child of 85 on something parents, I have heard several stories that begin with "when I was your age" and end with how disappointing my generation is. The 25th century saw more economic, technological and social progress than any other before it. But these baby boomers who managed the companies that polluted our air and water. They headed up the Enron and WorldCom. They targeted their marketing campaigns at younger generations for cigarettes, fast food and the same toxic many of them are trying to detrimental to society. And they have arguably marginalized the Third World and helped ignore those terrorists who seek to destroy our way of life. Or maybe I'm just a disrespectful and angry thirty-something who has it too easy.

Brian Roddy, Toronto

Those of us who marched against the Iraq war earlier this year and clearly recognize the problems in our country tend to think that if our parents had only stood to their beliefs



Always a show on TV with people having sex

in the 1960s and '70s we wouldn't be in this mess today. We watch with horror at the destruction our governments are spreading. In our name and wonder how our parents let this happen.

Russell Roddy, Calgary

The Canadian game

After your recent cover article "Game over?" (Nov. 5), readers responded with a common theme, that they have grown tired of "professional" athletes making ridiculous salaries and hope to see an alternative in the near future (The Mail, Nov. 17). Well, they don't have to wait. The Canadian Hockey League exists, made up of the Western Hockey League, Ontario Hockey League and Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, with skilled players aged up to 21, trying to develop into NHL calibre. Many teams are in smaller cities such as Moncton, N.B., Suds, St. Marie, Ont., and Prince George, B.C. I often find this hockey much more exciting and enjoyable to watch than the NHL. The average ticket price is around \$15, about \$400 for seven tickets (35 games), which is very affordable considering that \$400 might get you two Leaf games.

Prasad Bhat, Oak Ridge, Ont.

Too much for TV

The article "Sex, sex and sex" (Sunday, Nov. 17) leads me to the conclusion that primitive media guests are so screwed up they

are not able to see that meaningful relationships do not necessarily include sexual intercourse. They seem to have lost all sense of intimacy, decency, companionship and friendship for the sake of appealing to the most primitive instincts.

Elizabeth S. Briggs, Salmon Arm, B.C.

Whenever I turn on the TV, it seems as though I can always find a show with people having sex or intimating the fact of having sex. What bothers me is that television pornography is something dirty—naughty even. Sex is something shared by two people who love each other. Flashed on every TV screen, it's losing its mystery and allure. Modernize please.

Ellen Goss, Hamilton

Shania's confession

In the "Quote of the Week" (Up Front, Nov. 17), Shania Twain says about Northern Ontario: "There are a lot of hairy girls in winter. You wear long sleeves and pants and you become a gorilla." What is wrong with this woman so say such a thing to an American audience, no less? Her comments are so degrading to Northern Ontario women. Most Americans think Canadians live in igloos or sheds and use polar bears for transportation. We are desperately trying to change that image by talking up Canada to our American acquaintances. I am so disappointed in Ms. Twain's remarks, and in your magazine for printing them.

Kyle Paulsen, Niagara Falls, Ont.



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But don't stop there! Nominate your
favourite athlete, entertainer, health-
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The results will be in the first-ever
Maclean's Canadian of the Year double
issue to hit newsstands Dec. 22, 2003.

MACLEAN'S

MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



VOX POPULI

What do former Ontario Premier Mike Harris and journalist Naomi Klein, author of *No Logo*, have in common? What about Stephen Harper and Stephen Lewis? And Alberta Premier Ralph Klein and same-sex marriage activist John Fisher? They're among the dozens of Readers' Choice nominees for Maclean's first-ever Canadian of the Year.

While the choice of Canadian of the Year will rest with a panel of senior Maclean's editors, our readers' votes will be given due consideration. And that gives you the opportunity to help decide what's bound to be a much-discussed—and controversial—choice.

When you visit www.macleans.ca and cast your vote, you'll also be invited to give us your choices for the news event, entertainer, athlete and health worker of the year. The spirited competition has yielded the following early leaders in each category:

- News event: SARS (56 per cent)
- Entertainer: Shania Twain (26 per cent)
- Athlete: Mike Weir (49 per cent)
- Health Worker: Roy Romanow (29 per cent)

The results of both the Readers' Choice Poll and the Canadian of the Year will be unveiled in our year-end double issue, which also includes the 20th annual Maclean's Year-End Poll. Watch for it on newsstands the week of Dec. 22 and online at www.macleans.ca.

You have until Dec. 6 to cast your ballot. So take a few minutes to tell us what you think. Your opinion matters and your vote could make all the difference.

For further information about this article, contact:
behindthescenes@macleans.ca.

Wake up to what's really going on.



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UPFRONT

Justice | The fog of suspicion

William Sampson imprisoned in Saudi Arabia, then pardoned to come back to Canada as an angry man. Maher Arar, deported to Syria from New York, then freed to return home to Ottawa to tell a tale of torture. Two brothers from Toronto, Abdul Rahman and Omar Khadr, held as terror suspects at the U.S. compound at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Abdul Rahman was let go, mysteriously, perhaps as far back as July, while Omar is still behind barbed wire. And, finally, Hassan Almerai, detained in Toronto for two years now, pending a court decision on deporting him to his native Syria. Their cases cover a bewildering range of legal and diplomatic issues. Yet all are now bound together with a parcel of politically charged questions about how the federal government stacks up for Canadians abroad, and how Ottawa's role in the war on terror matches—or clashes—with basic human rights.

Last week, someone in government decided to fire back at, at least, some of its critics. An outline of interventions on Sampson's behalf—49 attempted consular visits by Canadian diplomats and seven trips to Saudi Arabia by Canadian politicians and officials—was leaked to the Globe and Mail. But how far is Ottawa really prepared to go?

On Arar, the government suddenly toughened its line, as Deputy Prime Minister John Manley and then prime minister-to-be Paul Martin slammed his deportation by the U.S. But what about Omar Khadr? He was just 15 when he was captured among al-Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan last year. Ottawa pleaded, unsuccessfully, for him not to be sent to the controversial Guantanamo Bay camp. Now, news that his brother, Abdul Rahman, was let go is early as July and sent to either

Abdul Rahman Khadr's family tells a news conference that they want him home in Toronto after his stint in Guantanamo Bay prison camp

Pakistan or Afghanistan raises new questions about Omar's future—and his brother's. The Khadr family hired a lawyer, and said Abdul Rahman wants to return to Toronto to explain himself but can't get embassy help. Ottawa said it has heard nothing from the man but there is confusion as to which department heard what, when.

Meanwhile, a Toronto judge slapped Ottawa's attempt to deport Almerai to Syria, citing the kind of human rights violations that Arar allegedly experienced. This was even after Almerai admitted weapons training in Afghanistan (to fight "infidels" in the early 1990s, he said) and using a false passport to enter Canada. Struggling to sort it all out? So is your government. JOHN GEORGE



ScoreCard

✓ Lumpy Spencer Saskatchewan's MP knows job as Canadian Alliance's ally comes in the after-morning of an conspiracy and pointing for votes to deny when home security was illegal. Both would that voters better some. Some quarry about political coupling with Almerai.

▲ Low-carb Larry Liberal and Sherman bowties bringing out dark-reduced lenses as some for holiday. Such a perfect complement to Almerai's diet, much froth and fat. Be warned: with four-year-old should, there's still risk of a hangover, just not at the belt buckle.

✓ Gregory Freeman Adds realism to the Almerai mission trip in Atlantic City, Nev., by firing pistol who-ah. What goes on, take down, bring participant Jeffrey Murr. Fortunately bullet struck murr's head but not Murr's head.

▲ Cautious Kip Almerai town may make 1980 anniversary by staging some version of Pearl Harbor. Spahr's moment of the bells. Which would honor their town with a walling of the rain. Much still, he has not live to 150 by taking chances.

▲ Sir John A. Sir John A., first on page. Knock with plastic action figure of Canada's first PM. Coming up as series from Internet's bulwark technology is Sir Wilfrid Laurier and maybe Winston. How about casting entire Liberal backbench as Jubilee head collect.

Quote of the week | 'Standards of behaviour were unacceptably low.'

Public Works Minister and Paul Martin ally **RALPH GOODALE**, promising an ethical crackdown on a government that he's been a member of for the past 30 years



Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



ROLLING THE DICE

Our ability to handle a terrorist threat is so weak, it's good we haven't faced a crisis

FOR the security experts, much as we would like to dive thoughts, there were three glories. Of all too possible, scenarios for discussion. One consisted of a dirty bomb attack in Seattle with pneumatic trucks in Vancouver and a radiation strike from a ship. The second considered an imprecise threat to East Coast energy infrastructure. And the third explored the old H&S journey of Senator Ahmed Razaavi, who tried to smother the U.S. from Canada in 1999 with explosives.

The participants had gathered behind closed doors at Toronto's C.D. Howe Institute this fall to connect longer-term security strategies from these events. But, amid grim premonitions and friendly squabbling over the extent of Canada's risk, one chilling fact emerged: "The threats are going to be accelerating and more pervasive," says Institute policy analyst Danielle Goldfield. "But Canada does not really have a security policy." The level of operation that is going to be needed, internationally and among Canadian levels of government, is unprecedented.

There is no easy fix. Paul Martin has declared that the development of a national security policy to protect us from terrorism is a top priority. But he adheres to an alphabet soup of organizations,

"We need a senior cabinet minister whose first thought every day is the job of keeping Canada safe."

—POLYGRAPHIC CHAIRMAN
SANDRA GULIN-KIRBY

U.S. security issues, especially the border. But there is no national operations centre for emergencies. Worse, the notorious case of Maher Arar, the Canadian whom the U.S. deported to Syria based on RCMP reports of his alleged terrorist links, indicates the need to preserve civil liberties and devise better rules on information sharing.

There are formulas for reform. Macdonald has learned that Auditor General Sheila Fraser will take the highly unusual step of declaring in her March report that Canada needs more internal security coordination. Two months ago, the Senate national security committee noted that ministers responsible for security are too junior, the appropriate department in any emergency is often reluctant to take the lead because it means paying the bills—and other departments do not pay attention anyway. "We want a senior cabinet minister whose first thought every day is the job of keeping Canada safe," says the committee's chairman, Senator Colin Kenny.

The former head of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, David Mordue, told Macdonald that the solution is to create a special central intelligence body that would receive reports from every group ranging from GSB to the money-laundering experts at Finance. "The director would be responsible for putting a screen intelligence summary on the desk of the prime minister and senior ministers every morning by 8 a.m.," adds Mordue.

That director would face disparate challenges. The C.D. Howe conference heard that Canada probably does not have enough authorities to deal with a germ attack. But the U.S. would likely have antibiotic experts to provide for itself. The wonder is that we have accepted such serious problems for so long. The urgency seems from the fact that our back cannot be forever.

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer in Toronto. Her e-mail address is mjanigan@torstar.com.

FaceTime



John Goss, 26, left, and Jim Gowan, 21, of E.C., are facing an end for the 1994 kidnapping deaths of Kaitlynn's parents and outside sister. Prosecutors say the teen-agers killed the family, then hung in Seattle, so Italy could avoid the inside. Defence lawyers challenged a liquidation one of the pair made to a Mountain posing as a gangster.



In October 1994, Country star Glen Campbell, 67, claimed the emotional memory of alcohol and a prescription anti-anxiety drug for a car accident in which he was charged with death. He was charged with death. He was charged with death. He was charged with death.



Providence MP Andy Scott is nursing some strange and broken following a brawl at his riding office. A constituent said appeared at party and party was charged with assaulting the Liberal MP, who headed a Conservative committee that endorsed same-sex unions.



his own shortcomings, but also issued his accurate. That is, for the last time. That is, for the last time. That is, for the last time.



that should have put them back into the early 1990s, and also should have moved them quickly to establish an in-house network. "I think there was a lot of thought on how to do it," says Gowan. "I just don't think it worked the way everybody expected it to."

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WORLD

CHAMPINE For the first time in years the machine guns fell silent along the disputed Kashmir border as heavily armed Indian and Pakistan agreed to a surprise ceasefire proposed by Pakistan. The ceasefire does not extend to the militant Islamic groups that have been sniping the Indian army, but it has allowed villages on both sides to engage in holiday visits.

MEDICARE In a huge partisan win, Republicans forced through a sweeping overhaul of U.S. Medicare, a US\$400-billion reform that will provide a drug-benefit plan to nearly 40 million uninsured Americans. Opposed by Democrats and some senior GOPers (opining Medicare's doctors provide insurance, the bill was also criticized for not imposing price controls on prescription drugs, a victory for the pharmaceutical industry, which now wants to roll back negotiated pricing in Canada and Australia.

COLOMBIA In either a hopeful first step or an elaborate charade, 800 members of right-wing paramilitaries, responsible for some of the worst atrocities in Colombia's long-running, drug-fueled civil war, laid down their weapons during a nationally televised

disarmament. Under a July pact with the government, nearly 13,000 militia members were to be disbanded by the end of 2005.

DEMOCRACY Georgians go to the polls again on Jan. 4, two months after disputed parliamentary elections and on the heels of the so-called "rose revolution" in which Eduard Shevardnadze was ousted as president by a combination of demonstrators and, some say, the financial backing of American billionaire George Soros. Hard liners defeated moderates in Northern Ireland's long-delayed elections, which does not bode well for reviving Catholic-Protestant power-sharing. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists appear to be the biggest winners.

PEDOPHILE A 28-year-old British man was sentenced to 42 years in a Thai jail following a five-month sex holiday during which he lured eight boys between 7 and 13 to his rented apartment and uploaded pictures of them to a child-porn site. Mueen, as an example, the sentencing came as the Thai government was debating legalizing its flourishing prostitution business.

CHILD RAPE Zambian politicians accused powerful mining men who rape children. The country reported over 400 cases of child rape in the first half of 2003, many by men who believe the sex can cure AIDS.

SEMENTA MRI scans of middle-aged brains can predict future cases of Alzheimer's nine times out of 10, New York researchers said. They found a spot that seems to have a role in the development of dementia, and hoped it could be a target for treatment.

HUNGER After years of decline in the 1990s, hunger is on the rise again, the UN reported: each night about 842 million people go to bed without enough food.

NO DODO The longest, long-legged wader, given up to the extinction list more than a century ago, has turned up alive and well in Fiji. Amateur ornithologists documenting Fiji's distinctive birds found 12 pairs of the reclusive seabird after hearing its haunting call in a remote valley.

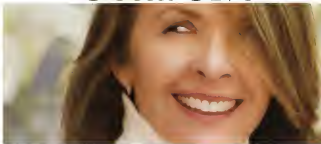
BUSINESS

IRONMAN Seagram's heir Edgar Bronfman Jr., a one-time singer who lost much of the family fortune on an ill-fated concert-



A TALK BY
HOLLY HAYES

Jack Diane Something's Gotta Give



Keanu Reeves Frances McDormand Amanda Peet

COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENTS A WOLFGANG PETERZ PRODUCTION A WOLFGANG PETERZ FILM HONORING A FILM BY NANCY MEYERS STARRING JACK HEDGECOCK FRANK WHILDEN
"SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE" KEANU REEVES FRANCES MCDORMAND AMANDA PEET JON GORDON "HOLLY HAYES" "HOLLY HAYES" NANCY MEYERS

December 12

Long Pictures.com

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AIDS TOLL

At least 40 million people are infected with HIV/AIDS—five million more HIV cases this year alone—and the disease is spreading from its epidemic in Africa to India, Southeast Asia, and China, the UN and World Health Organization reported. AIDS has orphaned about 13 million children in Africa. But none of would top 25 million by 2010.



WINTER'S OTHER POND

With the tourists gone, a heavy contingent of independent artists takes over the painting on its own. Here, Seattle's custom shops, King, if you don't like can play hockey in 15°C.

slightly, two orderlies squared off verbally about a bedridden disabled woman. Two years of the 55-year-old patient hid a tape recorder in her room, capturing the orderlies' taunting her, leaving her in excitement for long periods, and telling her a peeping Tom was watching through the window.

SAME SEX In Toronto, 951 marriage licenses (since 1999) issued by the city's the two friends since gay marriage was legalized in Ontario have gone to homosexual couples, a third of whom came up from the U.S.

Kids raised by gay parents aren't worse

BY VINCE RODENWILL



ment venture with French-Canadians, is back in the music biz. Bonifant led an investor group takeover of Warner Music Group for US\$1.6 billion.

NUMBERS The U.S. economy, riding a surge of war spending, rose an eye-popping 9.2 per cent from July to September.

Canada topped the G7 countries in education spending and also boasted the highest proportion of adults—41 per cent—with either a college or university degree.

The Royal Bank of Canada became the first Canadian bank to post \$3 billion in profit in a single year.

ACQUISITIONS Cask-stopped British Columbia sold BC Rail Ltd., the country's third largest rail line, to Montreal-based Canadian National Railway Co. for \$1 billion.

B.C. forestry giants Canfor Corp. and Slocan Forest Products Ltd. agreed to a \$455 million share exchange that would create North America's second-largest lumber company. A previous takeover attempt by Canfor was foiled off by Slocan in 1998.

COOKIES Vancouver's Cookies Ltd. of Burlington, Ont., pumped in the face of the health by cookie rice, announcing all its products would be free of ubiquitous trans fats, an artery clogging man-made shortening, by March 2004.

CANADA

FUR A child in Peterborough, Ont., died in Colorado and at least five young people in Belarus have died from this year's influenza outbreak. While it is rare for children to die from the flu, experts say they may be particularly vulnerable this year because previous outbreaks have been mild and the flawed flu vaccine opportunity to build immunity.

ELECTRICITY Breaking an election promise, Ontario's new Liberal government will lift a 10-year price freeze on electricity on April 1. A new system will cost so-called average households an extra \$6 a month.

ARREST At the centre of a controversy, Montreal hospital director, Léon Lefebvre, killed himself in a tragic event to an already sad story. Lefebvre's hospital was being investigated by the province after he spent nearly 10

off psychologically or even prone to be gay, according to a study by Canadian Psychological Association.

JUSTICE Six Vancouver cops pleaded guilty to coercion attacks for beating three suspected drug dealers in a remote section of Stanley Park almost a year ago, striking and hitting at least one with a baton, and telling them to get out of town. The plea, to much reduced charges, effectively kills a civil suit against the officers, the victims' lawyer said.

HILLS ANGRY Quebec ordered the demolition of the heavily fortified Milla Angels bunker near Quebec City, which Justice Minister Marc Bellemare called a "symbol of gangsterism." The building and land was seized under federal anti-gang laws.

POLITICS Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray, who is being courted to run federally for the Green, blasted Manitoba Premier Gary Doer for putting the onus on the city's innovative new tax reforms. Doer wouldn't buy into a one per cent municipal sales tax for Winnipeg, which he said would only drive shoppers to the border.

Alliance Leader Stephen Harper stripped Regina MP Larry Spencer of his critic's job for family issues after Spencer told a newspaper he believes homosexuality should be illegal. Spencer later apologized, but the remarks threw a wrench into the ongoing strategy proposal with the Tories.

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UPFRONT

Mansbridge on the Record



EGOS AND LIMOUSINES

There will be some disappointed faces when Paul Martin announces his cabinet

THE LIGHTS were burning late at Skanesis in the early days of June 1979—Joe Clark was putting together his cabinet after defeating the Liberals in the general election the previous month. There were a lot of things to consider during that transition—it was a minority government, leaders were to be rewarded, “use” candidates were to come from both coasts, and with a Quebec referendum looming, Clark had to decide how to give that province cabinet representation after winning only one of its 75 seats.

There were theories aplenty swirling around Parliament Hill—some even named yet to be true. The Liberals were doing their best to get in their last show after 16 years of uninterrupted power. Pierre Trudeau's press people scowled “We'll be back” in lipstick on the mirror in their soon-to-be vacated office. (Nine months later the same group wrote “Welcome Back” on the Opposition leader's mirror when Clark and Trudeau changed offices again.) Ernest Ray Hnatyshyn, then an MP from Saskatchewan. Everyone seemed to agree: Hnatyshyn would be in the new cabinet, given his loyalty to Clark and the bridge he'd been in party since John Diefenbaker. The Chief wanted to get apart, and often, and Hnatyshyn ensured the situation never got out of hand.

Hnatyshyn, who made his name by being one of Saskatchewan's foremost doctors, dreamed of being prime minister. The night before the new government was to be sworn in, he was flown to Ottawa, and told only that he would be in the inner circle. He called me—we've been friends for years—so ask what I was hearing. I suggested

he drop by, when he arrived I looked him in the eye and asked, “What do you know about Energy?” I thought he was going to pass over Energy was the political hot potato of the time, the Tories had promised to sell Petro-Canada, the crown oil company, and the energy sector was to be controversial. Hnatyshyn would be the first to admit the Energy portfolio, which he did get the next day, wasn't a career moment for him.

Which is all to say that there are going to be some disappointed faces in the next few days when Paul Martin announces his cabinet, even on some who will be in it. Cabinet-making isn't easy—there are only a few senior positions, but lots of people who think they're qualified. And of course when you get to the full cabinet, there simply are not enough limos on Parliament Hill to chauffeur the egos who feel they should be entitled to sit in one. Even some who may well be worthy of a position won't get it because of regional, ethnic and gender considerations.

You are going to hear a lot of rumours over those next few days—many of them floated for mischief. Remember the son-to-be PM is the old finance minister who made names floating a fine art. By the time his budgets were read in the House of Commons, there was already just one policy surprise left—something to make it look like the whole process had been secret. It might be wise to expect the same here.

As for Hnatyshyn, when we lost almost a year ago now, he occasionally did get his dream job of Justice when Brian Mulroney was handing out cabinet positions a few years later. But he never forgot his extraordinary time in Energy. We were fence golf competitors over the years, and whenever he was too far ahead, I'd whisper “Petro-Canada” during his backswing. It always worked.

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News, and Anchor of the National. No comment is@pam@macmex.com.

Passages

HONoured Sgt. Robert Short, 42, a model soldier and platoon leader who was killed by a land mine in Afghanistan on Oct. 3, was chosen, posthumously, by his peers for the Canadian military's prized Victor Award for outstanding leadership.

REVIEWER Manitoba ordered a judicial review into the case of James Driskell, convicted 13 years ago of murdering his best friend. New information suggests the Crown or police did not pass along potentially exonerating evidence during the trial. Driskell, 49, was released on bail pending the results.

QUITTING John Manley, the minister of finance who, perhaps too vigorously, challenged Paul Martin for the Liberal leadership, is leaving the party in July, and he would not run in the next election. A former finance affairs minister, the 53-year-old Ottawa MP was Jean Chrétien's most prominent rival in 1995.

SELECTED Carole James, a 45-year-old single mom with two grown children, is the new leader of B.C.'s NDP opposition, a party with two seats in the legislature. A Meis who was a school teacher, James is believed to be the first Aboriginal person to lead an established political party in Canada.

WOM Queen's University physician Arthur McDonald, 60, won the prestigious Gerhard Herzberg medal for science, an award that guarantees him \$1 million in research funding over five years. McDonald heads the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory, which studies the elusive elements of the universe.

NAMED Louise Alice Elizabeth Mary Mountbatten-Windsor, the Queen's seventh grandchild and the first child of Prince Edward and his wife Sophie, was finally brought home and named after 15 days in hospital. She will be known as Lady Louise.

DIED Wanda Spauls, the greatest left-handed pitcher of all time, was a backstop of the powerful Milwaukee Braves club in the 1950s. He died in his Oklahoma home at 82.



CASEY HOUSE
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'THE JIHAD SUPERBOWL'

Embedded in Iraq, ALEXANDRE TRUDEAU finds misgivings among American troops

OF THE TWO GREAT RIVERS flowing through Iraq, the Euphrates is slower and bluer. It runs into the country from Syria, curving across Iraq's western desert arid beds toward the Mesopotamian flood plain in the south. Along its shores, the river provides one continuous oasis through an inhospitable wasteland, a channel of life beside which ancient villages are sited out.

The town of Fallujah is 50 km west of Baghdad. From there on up, the Euphrates hosts innumerable little farming communities, inhabited by Sunni Muslims. From Baghdad to Ramadi, along the Euphrates, the villages form the bottom side of what the Americans

call the Sunni triangle. This is the heartland of the resistance to the American occupation.

I long dreamed becoming embedded with the American forces. Since the beginning of the war, what interested me was the free dom of Iraq's civilian population, not the machine that came to deliver it. But eight months into the American presence here, I feel compelled to embed myself with them (shirking before George W. Bush's tyrannical war) to have a look at what the Americans are all about. My Iraqi friends are anxious to hear what I might learn from spending time with the strange and aloof forces that now control their country and promise freedom. I could think of no better place to experience this than the Sunni triangle, along the banks of the Euphrates. Like Tikrit to the north, the towns north of Fallujah and Ramadi have been a hot of insurgence.

On a dreary day, I arrive in Fallujah in search of the Americans. It is a scary place. Unlike other big towns in central Iraq, American forces are nowhere to be seen. No check points, no checkpoints, no patrols. Local police are huddled down behind sandbags, corner walls and buried cars. There is graffiti everywhere. It reads "We O.K. them from the Americans. It is O.K. to kill Americans." Or, "Blessed is he who kills Americans." And,



Into the heart of darkness, the author travels up the Euphrates river by helicopter

"Saddam is a hero of the Arabs. Yes, yes Saddam." Learning up a grimy building, stern young men scan the passing traffic. I try to disappear into the sea of my friend Anwar's car. Luckily, Anwar's Volkswagen has to be the densest piece of junk on the road, so no one pays attention to us. Up ahead, a boy trades cars with his toy pistol, occasionally firing an imaginary shot "Don't

get stuck in traffic," I tell Anwar. He begins chain-smoking.

The American base is several kilometers outside of the city, the barracks over 1,000 m inside the outer walls. At the gate, I wait for the appropriate official to take me in. It is cold. The boys at the gate are almost delirious. "Goose, place, son?" they say, and laugh. "Arf! Arf! you are not in Fallujah being shot at," I tell them. One of them replies, "I'd rather be shot dead than stuck here."

Once I get inside, a friendly major tells me, "In Fallujah, we have decided to let the Iraqi authorities look after the town themselves. The Iraqi guys occasionally cry and shoot in here with artillery or mortars. But you see how far we are from the outside walls. We're too far for them to reach properly. Plus we can acquire mortar or artillery rounds and respond instantly." I ask him to explain what he means by "acquire." "We triangulate the origin of the projectile while it is in the air and the right back on the position with deadly force," he says.

I also visit their medical facilities. The base's chief internist explains that they are equipped with all they need, including a dentist and a psychiatrist. "This way we don't need anybody home that we can't rest here. With as many soldiers already deployed, we have to preserve manpower," the doctor says. Top military officials have promised to station over 100,000 new soldiers in Iraq next year, to replace the 130,000 currently serving there who will be going home shortly. It is sure to be a real squeeze.

THE NEXT BIG BASE up the Euphrates is in Ramadi, a town that is only slightly less

scarier than Fallujah. The Americans have camped in one of Uday Hussein's fishing palaces on the banks of the river. Today, I am lodged in an ancient sandstone villa— one of many now converted into barracks. My bunkmates are awoken by the television to see whether "the Bachelor" will choose to marry the blond or the brunet in the show's final episode.

Ramadi is a headquarters base. To experience actual operations, the next morning I travel even farther up the Euphrates. A hundred kilometers north, a road climbs out of the river basin at the beautiful town of Al-Baghdadi. It goes through a valley in a desert plateau, and at the end of it is Saddam Hussein's Al-Azad air force base, now being used by U.S. forces. Old MIG jet fighters are strewn across the valley floor, each half-entombed in the ground. One theory held that Saddam, in his desperate conflict, was reluctant to use his jet fighters for fear they might be destroyed in combat. So he buried them. Now they sit in their individual graves, slowly disappearing in the desert. Al-Azad was built with funding from Yu-

goslav, and features a sports centre, the arm and indoor swimming pool. Along the edge of the valley, hangars have been cut into the cliffs. On top of the plateau is a vast series of runways and taxiways.

Once again I am greeted cordially by the American soldiers I ask about chop-choy on a huge mess hall. All eyes are focused on the big screen television in the latest Michael Jackson drama unfolds. "Great! Now all of America is going to be stuck speculating about Michael Jackson's freely available for the next six months," a soldier jokes. "It's better than hearing about us in the news place," another replies.

Al-Azad is only a short trip along any way. To see any real action, I fly farther up the river by helicopter. A tall young officer in uniform shades is along for the ride. "What do Canadians think of all this?" he asks as we are waiting to lift off. "I think most of us support the UN as the best chance we

have for a more peaceful world and are a little suspicious of the American presence here," I respond. "I guess we just don't quite understand what is happening here and why." He considers this and says, "A good part of my own family is Canadian from New Brunswick. I always have a lot of explaining to do when I see them." Before flying into the desert, we momentarily hover over the city, taking in its full exposure: dozens of helicopters (including Apache, Blackhawk and Chinook), hundreds of Humvees, and thousands of men to suit them all. The officer

continues: "You know that I was the one to schedule the Chinook flight out of here—the one that got shot down over Fallujah? Sixteen men died. They were on their way to Baghdad, going on leave. They were on their way out of here. I tell you we're the first ones to want peace so that we can get the hell out." He pauses. "I don't have all the in-

GRAFFITI everywhere reads: "Blessed is he who kills Americans" and "Saddam is a hero of the Arabs"



American soldiers in northwest Iraq search for hostile militants as part of Operation Tiger Strike. They find two terrified women.

swers. But answers or not, I have a job to do."

The helicopter glides over the western Iraqi desert, which goes on without a blade of grass for miles. An eerie industrial complex emerges in the horizon ahead: solar and windmills in the desert haze—it was from *Mad Max*. It is a phosphate plant whose production stalled due to sanctions. Beside it is a huge oilfield facility. This has been converted into my next destination: Tiger Base.

IT IS AN IMPRESSIVE sight, a showcase example of the American military in full operation. At Tiger Base, helicopters are always buzzing overhead, while heavily armed vehicles constantly roll in and out of the camp—high tech Abrams and Bradley tanks. As I arrive, engineers unveil glow-in-the-dark dodging facilities for more vehicles. The soldiers sleep in big canvas-style tents. Rows of their line the abandoned railway tracks. At night, the desert is brilliantly cold. The tents are not heated. Water for showering is in short supply. News and night-vision are served hot meals. There

are no TVs, no pool table, no entertainment. In the evening, the troops listen to death metal, play video games and read fan-boy magazines until it gets too cold to sit around. Then they go to bed—bored and tired.

In the tent next to mine, one young soldier is all too eager to tell me his story. "In the last week," he says, "I been shot at, I been mortared and I nearly been blown up. I damn near froze my black ass off every night in here. They didn't tell me all this when I signed up. Goddamn!"

TIGER BASE is a top secret base southeast of the Syrian Iraqi border at Al-Qaim on the Euphrates. The Third Armored Cavalry Regiment from Colorado Springs is a few days into Operation Rifles. It's a major crackdown on resistance activities in the region. "We call this place 'the Jihad Superhero,'" the regiment's colonel tells me. "This border area has long been a smuggler's par-

adise. Now it's become a haven for anti-coalition cell organizers. Through here, they bring people and equipment in and out of Iraq, then parachute down the 'Bat Line,' the Euphrates River communities. We are here to disrupt all that." That means sealing off these towns whose populations total some 130,000. It means systematically going through every home in the area looking for

weapons, banned communication devices like satellite phones, and wanted persons. It means assessing suspicious design and forgery. So far, the regiment has destroyed over 317

suspects and inspected 3,034 homes. It is an immense operation.

One night at Tiger Base, dawn near freezing my ass off, I am invited to the operations area. Donning a helmet and a bulletproof vest (in per regulations), I am loaded into the back of a Bradley. With me in the belly, the armored vehicle thunders off

"WE WANT to get the hell out of here," an officer tells me. "I don't have all the answers. But I have a job to do."

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American soldiers patrol the desolate fields inside the banks of the Euphrates, searching for weapon caches.

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into the desert. Four squads in through the air vents. After a good half hour of redneck and robbers, the vehicle stops and the back hatch is dropped. Outside, more desert.

The remaining officers gather for their orders. They're a tough, competent bunch. As they talk, artillery fire sounds out. Some suspicious locations have nearly just been razed. In the distance, flames shoot into the air. Pointing to a map, the officers list off what areas have been covered and what has been found. They also describe how much money has been passed out, since every household that is searched and found to be in compliance is given US\$50. Every informant is paid for useful information.

After that, I am loaded into another Bradley and soon after dropped off in the

middle of a row of tents, strung in a defensive pattern. City lights visible on the horizon. For the young men here, Tiger Balm is a luxury, somewhere to sleep and relax, but rarely. The captain sends me on to the village of Sadah with a tank platoon. Inside a Humvee jeep, which is driven between tanks to protect us from mines. The desert path so soon has been ground to a fine dust by armored vehicles. My travel is the following cloud of an artificial dust storm.

In the village, a severe curfew is in place. Anyone seen in the streets between dusk and dawn will be arrested or shot. My Humvee takes position on a dirt road just outside of town on the edge of the farmland between the village and the desert. We are there to enforce the curfew. Our tool for observation is a piece of classified equipment: a laser-lighting device mounted on the Humvee's turret. It can pinpoint a person 20 km away. "What you see is not light, but electrons converted into images," the sergeant explains. I focus on the minaret of a little mosque, somewhere across the river and from the village bazaar. The device tells me that the object is 17,465 m away. "The next step will be to relay that information by satellite to our howitzers," he says. "So up to a range of 20 km, you can see your target and bring hellfire down upon it with in a matter of seconds." I ask him, "Do you have any enemy worthy of all this technology?" He taps a raply, "No one will

dare to become our enemy ever again."

At dawn, I join a group of four soldiers who are doing door-to-door searches in the village we've been observing, or the "area," as the troops refer to it. It doesn't appear dangerous. In the valley between the desert hills, the Euphrates is magnificent. On its banks, people have irrigated plots of wheat, corn and onions. They lead their herds out to graze in the grasses by the river. In their gardens grow oranges, grapes and date palms.

The young soldiers onto people's compounds with a mix of menace and apprehension. As they march in, gripping their weapons, they awkwardly tell the inhabitants "Peace be with you" in broken Arabic. Young girls nervously watch Americans

prod through their household belongings. Old men set off they have seen it all before. In my helmet and fat jacket, I might as well be a soldier, and give up trying to speak with these people.

This is Operation Reflex Blitz in full swing. When arrests are made, the suspects' hands are tied and they are made to wear a bag on their heads. They are then driven out of town to the desert, in a line of a few miles of land in the desert. The detainees are given two blankets each. They huddle together for warmth at night. They remain there for days.

Between the Americans and the Iraqis there is much misunderstanding. From within their awesome military machine, the American soldiers don't really understand what they are doing in Iraq. It is not surprising that the Iraqis cannot comprehend what the Americans are up to, or at least to understand the U.S. claims to offer. To reach out, the Americans need to appreciate the splendour—and livelihoods—granted to these people by the Euphrates. To reach out, the Americans have to show some appreciation for the things that move Iraqis—and some respect for their ancient humanity.

For now, the gap between the two only grows wider. Perhaps, years from now, one of these soldiers will return and be haunted by this river—and the memory of the young men who once walked along its banks without really seeing it.

VILLAGES along the river are part of the Sunni triangle—the heart of Iraqi resistance and epicentre of guerrilla war



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Turks protest against terrorism near the bombed British consulate in Istanbul. A man performs Friday prayers in the Blue Mosque (top).

ON THE EDGE

As it tries to join the EU, the nation is experiencing a rise in anti-Western sentiment

THINGS FALL APART. If famed Nigerian author Chinua Achebe had been Turkish, nothing would be more fitting today than the title of his most famous novel. In Turkey, where manipulating the subtleties of appearance has been the mainstay of the political class, things have begun to unravel after a series of devastating terrorist bombings in Istanbul.

The timing couldn't be worse. The four massive attacks against synagogues and British interests in the heart of Istanbul left more than 60 dead and scores injured. And with Turkey fighting an uphill battle to join the European Union, the fallout from those acts of terrorists to destroy the image the country's leaders have so meticulously tried to build since made in Turkey emerged from the rubble of the Ottoman Empire. Nothing can be more painful than making being back—reality in this case being the complex mosaic of religious and cultural strife, political intrigue and cover-ups, that has lurked beneath Turkey's projected state of calm for decades.

It's a harsh tale of events for a nation seeking international legitimacy. Not that the recent past has been peaceful. Turkey's relationship with its Kurdish minority, centered in the southeast, has been bloody, with violent uprisings that began in the mid-1970s and a military campaign against guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) that eventually resulted in the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999. Through out the 1990s and into this decade, there were also terrorist attacks, not only by the PKK

but also extremist Islamic groups and left-wing organizations. Many people believed that a massive government sweep in 2000 against one extremist group, the Turkish Hezbollah (it is distinct from the organization based in Lebanon) had largely ended the terrorist threat in this country, a staunchly secular Islamic state and one

IN ISTANBUL,
a city viewed as a bridge
between East and West,
Western influence is now
seen as overly pervasive

that prides itself on its religious tolerance. Now, the recent attacks in Istanbul have reopened wounds that have never really had time to heal.

And, inevitably, defensiveness has set in. On Istanbul's crowded streets, no one is willing to concede that the problems facing Turkey in its critical time are anything more than isolated anomalies, imported into the country from the outside. "This was nothing," insists Armin Alvir, standing aside the terrorist forest in early in the busy outdoor shop in Istanbul's upscale Bosphorus district, less than 100 yd from the devastated British consulate attacked by a suicide bomb on Nov. 26. "I don't think it will happen again. Very few think it will happen again. Look at everyone out shopping—the one is hiding."

But the grim reality is that the anger born toward the West that is gripping the

Islamic world is also present in Turkey. The victory of an Islamic fundamentalist party in the last national election in November 2002 was indication of the direction Islamic revivalists in Turkey has taken. In Istanbul, pockets tell the tale. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party (AK) enjoyed success in this city long viewed as a bridge between East and West, but one where Western influence is now coming to be seen as overly pervasive. That mood can be felt even in an affluent neighborhood such as Beşiktaş. "Many people here were becoming suspicious of the boom in bars and clubs," says Jümrük, a local real-estate and tour guide. "They were upset by the flood of foreign products and advertising, so they voted for the AK." Since taking power, though, Erdoğan's government has turned down much of its pro-Islamic rhetoric. And that may be largely due to fears that the army, the guardian of Turkish secularism, would mount any move toward Islamization of the country.

Many of Istanbul's residents now feel betrayed by the government. The reforms they'd hoped for, such as loosening restrictions on free speech that have helped stifle Muslim activism, have not materialized, and anti-Western sentiment continues to rise. Yes, there were demonstrations in Istanbul and Ankara against the recent bombings, but they were tinged with anger toward the U.S. and allies. "This is all because of our government's close ties to the U.S.," says Fehmi Kılıç, a 49-year-old taxi cab driver in Turkey. "When I voted for the AK, I thought they

would bring back some of the Islamic values we'd lost over the past few years. Instead, we have a government that poses itself to the US, and not to Allah."

Fetnah, like other Turks who have been swept up in the Islamic revivalist movement, has a hard time accepting that true Muslims could be behind the recent attacks. Instead, he sees a possible conspiracy. "Turkey is a part of Europe," he insists, "and Europe is becoming strong. Maybe Americanism worried about this and wants to use our country destabilized." But theories such as these gloss over some of the fissures in Turkey's diverse society, ones that the government and the army have tried to keep from widening.

Not an easy task now, in light of the bombings. The secular religious divide is under intense scrutiny, at home and in the international arena, where Turkey continues its efforts to join the EU (the EU has said that, among other things, Turkey has to improve its human rights record). In a shrill official use of Istanbul's main mosques, the imam, who asks that both his name and that of his place of worship not be used, asks others not before offering his opinions. He argues that secularism is only window dressing for a society that is more Islamic. But religious officers, he explains, are strictly controlled by the government, and imams, who are government-appointed, are barred from talking about religion with the media. "But this is only for the sake of appearance," he says. "This is an Islamic country. Turkish people are devout Muslims, not fundamentalists, but firm believers in the Koran and the teachings of the prophet Mohammed."

Even the secularism of the Turkish army only goes so far, he insists. "You must understand, the army does not exist in a vacuum. The soldiers, the officers, even the generals are all Muslim Turks. The government is Islamic." He insists that "no one in Turkey really believes that Muslims could have carried out the attacks." As for who did, he insists will not venture a guess. But, he adds as a final note: "I will say this much—fundamentalism has nothing to do with Islam. It is a word created by the West. Why do people talk so much about it here?



Explosions hit a bank (above) as well as the British consulate and two synagogues

terror? What about Jewish terror in Palestine? Or Christian terror in Ireland?"

For many of Turkey's religious leaders, Islamic extremism simply doesn't exist here. That view, of course, ignores the hundreds murdered by extremist groups over the past decade. And there are other skeletons in the dark recesses of recent Turkish history, among them allegations that the Turkish government actually made use of Hezbollah to attack Kurdish "enemies of the state" before cracking down on the organization. "Hezbollah hates the Kurdish movement because we are very moderate in our approach to Islam," explains Koop, a Kurdish businessman in Istanbul with strong ties to the Kurdish separatist movement. "They killed hundreds of our leaders, and everyone knows the government helped them."

Koop, who has asked that his real name not be used, fears that in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks Kurds might become

scapegoats. "The entire Kurdish community in Istanbul is afraid," he says, lighting another in a string of cigarettes as he sits in one of his carpet shops in Saltanahner, Istanbul's tourist district. "All the talk among our people is about what this will mean to our movement." But Koop adamantly denies that Kurds could have been behind the attacks, and points to Hezbollah. "In my opinion, these bombings are meant to marginalize the Kurdish conflict. The organizers know that if the government cracks down on Kurds in eastern Turkey there will be a violent backlash. I think that's why someone was used to carry out the bombings."

In fact, the investigation into the bombings has revealed that most of the attackers were from Bagdad, a dish town in the heart of Turkey's Kurdish east. But they were apparently not Kurds, according to recent leaks in the investigation. Although a previously unknown group, the Islamic Front of the Raiders of the Great Orient, claimed responsibility (acknowledging outside help from al-Qaeda), this organization is believed to be the latest manifestation of Hezbollah. The moment, it seems, may have been irresistible. Perhaps it never really died. In a country obsessed with projecting a British free image to the outside world, lifting up the bloody waves of civil unrests which has been swept under it. And clearing up will take more than simply assistance and another military sweep. ■



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BLAME AMERICA

We've been accused of souring things, but what about the U.S. attitude?

FIXING CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS was supposed to be a straightforward matter for Paul Martin. Opinion varies on just about every other aspect of his approach to government (is he a social justice Elberta like his dad or a bottom-line business guy? Will he open out power to MPs or control it in a new inner cabinet?) On coping with the Americans, though, the prime minister to be's approach is widely understood in this bar: The problem is that Jean Chrétien messed things up by needlessly annoying our biggest trading partner. All Martin has to do to improve on that record is to act friendly and get the lions of

communications open—or at least, that's how the Ottawa conventional wisdom goes.

But as Martin's Corps de Diplomats-quality flipside the Maher Arar case showed, avoiding clashes with Washington is not always so easy. It's the first comment on the troubling saga of the Canadian who was shipped off by the U.S. government to prison and torture in Syria was on message with his admitted strategy of cross-border congeniality. On Nov. 20, Martin called Arar's story "outrage," but also started scoldingly, "I must say that I certainly don't understand the American position." Really? Others were less un-demanding. Even Deputy Prime Minister John Manley—the most conspicuously pro-American minister in Chrétien's cabinet—warned bluntly that Washington's handling of the case jeopardized Canada-U.S. security co-operation.

So Martin thought again. At a news conference five days later, before even being asked about Arar, he volunteered his new line. "The Canadian passport has to be respected," Martin said, now denouncing the U.S. deportation of Arar as "unacceptable." He even left open the possibility of an inquiry into the affair—as Arar has been demanding—after he takes over as prime minister on Dec. 12. And so, on the very first U.S. Elberta

demand his attention since he won the Liberal leadership, Martin slipped into the pattern of conflict associated with the outgoing regime. Is it possible that conventional wisdom hasn't caught on, that Chrétien's diplomacy has not caused all the Elberta? Arar's explanation suggests not. "I blame America." That line of thinking is far from popular these days around Ottawa. Big business's main lobby group, the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, is urging Martin to "re-pair the all-important Canada-U.S. trade relationship." The aerospace and defence industries are also eager for stronger Canada-

AN FDA official warned that failure to play ball will lead to Canada being 'kicked in the ass.' How charmingly colloquial.

U.S. bonds, fearing what will happen to their Pentagon business if Canadian develop a taste for the independent stance Chrétien struck on the Iraq war. Martin promises more "sophisticated" management of U.S. relations, which sounds fine. The problem is, recent evidence suggests that if greater co-

operation is needed, it's mostly on the other side of the bilateral divide—down Washington way.

Take how John Ashcroft, the hard-nosed U.S. attorney general, has handled the Arar affair. At a meeting with Solicitor General Wayne Easter in Washington, Ashcroft offered no hint of regret, leaving Easter not a millimeter of diplomatic wiggle room when he met reporters to discuss what he had accomplished by visiting. Now, is that the sophisticated way to treat a prisoner in the war on terror who dreads by far a dial?

Or consider Washington's reaction to growing U.S. consumer demand for cheap prescription drugs from Canada. If the U.S. imposed new measures on that booming cross-border trade, Ottawa could hardly object. That's the sort of delicate governments get to make. What's hard to accept, though, is the attitude of U.S. officials, who seem to think Canada is somewhere out of place here. In fact, Canada regularly is lousy with more other Western democracies in holding down drug prices. It's the U.S. that's out of place. But that hasn't deterred the U.S. Food and Drug Administration from taking new at Canada's domestic policies, demanding that we amend our price-controlling ways. An untariffed FDA official was quoted in warning that failure to play ball will lead to Canada eventually being "kicked in the ass."

How charmingly colloquial! If Canada's crafted had similarly vexed frustration with U.S. policy on something human-ass, there's no mark would have been poured upon as yet another episode of petty anti-Americanism. The infamous episode of the Chrétien side



who called George W. Bush a monster is cited repeatedly in analysis of supposed negligence on the U.S. file. But let's get some perspective: This was a single comment *overheard* by a reporter—all advised, sure, but hardly evidence of sanctioned disrespect of the President. By comparison, the reported Bush nickname for Christian “Driv,” shown for denouement, suggests routine snickering around the White House. Canadians, accustomed to their politicians volunteering to be subjected to such winks as *The Howard Stern 23 Minutes*, tend to laugh off the sort of snail-and-negativity. Still, imagine the head-wringing if a belting snicker for Bush, used inside the Prime Minister’s Office, was reported.

But there are more substantial matters at stake than how country political insiders talk about presidents and prime ministers. On road cow discourse, the Americans closed the border to Canadian beef to make sure Japan stayed open to their own exports. So much for solidarity as the world’s biggest two-way trade partnership. And tough luck

for Canadian cattle farmers. Their losses such as the endless softwood lumber war are far too complex to categorically say who’s right and who’s wrong, but what can be observed is that there is little sign of American inclination to consider Canada as anything other than cold-eyed competitive terms.

Admittedly, such dollars-and-cents disputes are overshadowed by the lingering war question. Criticism of Clinton’s decision to sit out the Iraq invasion poisoned all elements of the Canada-U.S. relationship. Alliance Leader Stephen Harper has said that may be the real reason Canada didn’t get much sympathy from Washington on road cow disease. Harper meant that as a criticism of the Liberals. But if he’s right, isn’t it really an indictment of the Bush regime? Disagreement about war and peace should not factor into anyone’s calculations about trade and commerce.

U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci knows better than to make such oddball linkages. He frames the war rift not in economic, but tactical terms: “There is no security threat

to Canada that the United States would not be ready, willing and able to help with,” he said in his major speech on Canada U.S. ties in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion split. “We would be there for Canada, part of our family. That’s why so many in the United States are disappointed and upset that Canada is not fully supporting us now.”

Cellucci can’t really have meant the U.S. would blindly follow in northeastern way time Canada didn’t threatened. No Canadian would expect such unthinking loyalty. What Canada might ask is for a little diplomatic attention after a Canadian citizen gets tortured, thanks to a U.S. anti-terrorism push. Or for U.S. officials to lighten up on issues like the Internet prosecution drug trade. Or maybe, just maybe, for a little extra support during an agricultural crisis. If Martin was smooth the way to such consideration, his U.S. policy will be a ringing success. But as he has already learned on the Arab case, sometimes that won’t work. More often than he’d like, a Canadian prime minister needs to be ready to blame America. **B**



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THE PLAY'S THE THING

A new work on London's stage provides insights into Europe's troubles

AFTER SPENDING a fortnight trying to understand Europe's dismal economic performance, I finally got it: the play's the thing to catch the terror of the thing.

Britain's brilliant playwright Michael Frayn has a lot to tell us about the roots of today's straitened economics of the Eurozone. The author of the 1998 award-winning *Copenhagen* shows in his latest work, *Democracy*, now playing at Britain's National Theatre, how leftist chancellor Willy Brandt embraced German social progress between 1969 and 1974 (but belatedly reforms today). Since France and Italy quickly followed the German social economic

model, German political history is crucial to understanding today's Eurozone.

Inside global economy newspapers, Europe has been an also ran for years. Why are Europeans so complacent about their dismal performance? Such ease as they muster is sited at the Americans, not their leaders. If Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder were CEOs of major companies, they'd have been sacked long ago.

What was to have been a European vacation became a business holiday. Instead of just a few minutes' worth of book signings, I ended up spending two days with global visitors and spent much of the rest of the time trying to understand why ordinary people in France and Germany tolerate certain political moves that are 60 percent to 75 percent higher than those that have been driving American visitors away from George W. Bush. Why do they accept economic growth minus one eighth of the GDP rate that has Democrats comparing Bush's economic performance to the Depression's Herbert Hoover?

One must distinguish between the Eurozone (members using the euro) from those EU members sticking with their traditional currencies—most notably Britain. British GDP growth is slower than the nation in France, Germany and Italy, and its unemployment rate—a mere ten per cent—is roughly half the German rate, which is only slightly worse than the high joblessness plaguing France and Italy.

The EU is a collage of heterogeneous countries. One CEO's director doesn't do it all, although the Eurozone at the EU's head-quarters in Brussels keep issuing edicts,

taxes and regulations based on the mono-size principle. Sense of the smaller economies, notably Finland and Ireland, bears great growth rates, while the Eurozone Big Three—Germany, France and Italy—have been flirting with recession when they aren't growing globally.

The Eurozone is now the world's second biggest capital market, and the euro is now priced worldwide. Its members spend trillions on the military, leaving little government with less to spend on the good things of life. Problems is that these good things can include full state pensions after 30 years in the workforce and incredibly generous welfare payments that discourage people from taking jobs that they don't think they'd enjoy, or that would involve

that the victory of a socialist party means the Second World War is finally over. He reviles capitalism and assures voters that the advent of social democracy means an era of compassion—for each other and for the East Germans.

In reality, Brandt was a moderate, and as portrayed by Frayn, a powerful and successful change agent. The German economy was strong enough to afford his well-fans, and Brandt might have had a third term as chancellor except for the revelation that his closest staff member was an East German spy by coincidence, so Brandt was launching his transformation of Germany. Gen. Charles de Gaulle was departing as France's leader, and the dominant center-right party in Italy was fleeing the pressure to expand Italy's welfare state. By 1974, democratic socialism was the order of the day. Subsequent electoral victories across Europe by center-right parties did nothing to roll back the prosperity of benefits, and the move toward economic application of the 1990s gave EU interventionists the chance to expand the scope and reach of red tape and handouts.

Brandt and his allies were probably right for their time. But their infrastructure and super-structures partitioned Europe poorly for global competition now driven by free trade, rapid technological change, dramatic demographic, and the rise of China, Taiwan and South Korea to democratic prominence. So many Europeans have become used to their handouts and protection that the attempts to reform by Schröder, Chirac and Italy's Silvio Berlusconi will either be repeated, or will be too modest to do real good. Only somebody as great as Frayn's Brandt could do so much good—and create such gigantic longer-term problems.

Why

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'A GREAT DIVERTING OF ENERGY'

An Anglican bishop responds to the furor over his blessing of gay unions

ANGELICAN BISHOP Michael Ingham of the Vancouver regional diocese of New Westminster was once an avid reader of spy novels. The RCGB, he jokes, often rich or right into church affairs. These days, work precludes Ingham all the intrigue he needs. Members of the 80 church diocese voted last year—after long study and debate—to allow the blessing of same-sex unions. “We saw ourselves as supporting people who had

long been thrust to the margins of church and society because of prejudice about sexual orientation,” he says. In London, England, however, depictions of the church, with 70 million members around the world, denounced the initiative at a meeting in October. They also said they “deeply regret” the consecration in New Hampshire of Gene Robinson, the church’s first openly gay bishop. (Ingham’s attitudes toward ho-

mosexuality, the priestess warned, “will test the fabric of our Constitution at its deepest level.” Locally, Ingham’s stand has caused a rift with about a dozen conservative parishes in the congregation. He discussed the issue with Vancouver Bureau Chief Ben MacQueen.

What is the Anglican Church’s position on homosexuality?

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so far as I know, is that homosexual acts are sinful. But the reality is that many churches around the world are rethinking their position.

Has your view of homosexuality evolved?

I initially was afraid of gay and lesbian people because they posed me with a challenge of my understanding of human nature, my understanding of God's word and the revelation of the Scripture. It was only as I worked with them patiently that I found that they were as much afraid of me and the tradition of the Church. I began to realize there was a great injustice here. The Church restricts sexual activity to marriage and then restricts marriage to heterosexual people, and it leaves gay and lesbian people with no options other than abstinence or loneliness. I began to see eventually that the sin which the Church needs to pay attention to is homophobia and religiously based prejudice.

What does the blessing look like and how does it differ from a marriage?

It has more similarities but more differences. It is a public service in church in the presence of family and friends. It involves the making of vows and commitments between the two parties and it involves prayers for the couple and for their life together before God. It's different in the sense that if marriage, by definition, is a union between a man and a woman, this cannot be a marriage because the two people standing there are of the same sex. In the site that I have authorized, there's no exchange of rings or any of the symbols that you would associate with a wedding service. So, it's clearly the blessing of same sex unions, not same-sex marriage.

What has the reaction been?

I only know of two blessings that have happened in our diocese.

That's it?

Exactly. Much to do about... not nothing, but not as much as people are asking out.

What would Jesus do?

Jesus, in the Gospels, was a person who went toward people at the margins—lepers, tax collectors, women and people who were despised in the society in which he lived. His first sermon in Nazareth was regarded as good news to the poor, the prisoners, the blind. Jesus reserved a great deal of his criticism,

and some of it was quite strange, for the religious establishment of his day, whom he accused of being blind guides—knowing the Scriptures but not knowing God. He was crucified by the forces of religious orthodoxy in his day precisely for crossing religious boundaries. So I find it curious that people should say we are somehow not Christian, when it seems to me that the reverse is true.

There must be a cost to this debate.

We, there's been a great draining of energy all across the world, and certainly here in Canada. We've become internally focused in the Church and we're in danger of losing our sense of mission to the world beyond as I think there is a deep theological question being worked out. In that sense I'm not discouraged by the turmoil.

Are parishioners sitting on their wallets?

There is an economic cost. We had eight congregations walk out of our diocese synod in 2002. They have not been paying their assessment to the diocese. We've had to produce a new budget that has cut our hospital chaplains, for example. It has affected our support of the worldwide mission of the Church, in North America and overseas.

How do you deal with the personal toll?

I have drawers full of hate mail—the Internet has enabled the technological equivalent of dove by shootings. I've had to learn to deal with a level of intolerance and sheer hatred that I frankly didn't know existed in the Church. But when I read the Gospels and the life of Jesus, I realize, of course, that it's always been there.

What is at stake?

I think this conflict damages the credibility of the Church in the wider society. I've heard from many people, particularly younger people, who say, "Why should I join your church if it's so bigoted, so homophobic and so intolerant?" It doesn't feel like a church I want to join. It is internally weakening all of us. And, of course, there's the issue of whether the Communion as a whole will hold together. The genius of the Anglican Church is that we have managed to hold strong differences together within a single church. I think the forces of opposition that have been unleashed around this debate are antithetical to the Anglican spirit. ■

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THE DOCTOR IS IN... PAIN

Family physicians are fed up with the pressures, and they want to see solutions

AFTER YOUR SPOUSE and perhaps a close friend or two, your most intimate relationship could easily be with your family doctor. After all, the GP often knows things about you no one else does. But does that kind of support at least lead you and your doc to ask each other, "How'd life?" Rarely, it seems. A survey by Maclean's in partnership with The Medical Post reveals a vast chasm between doctors' attitudes toward themselves and their jobs, and their patients' understanding of them. Behind this professional fissure, it turns out, family doctors overwhelmingly feel stressed out, overwhelmed, underpaid and underappreciated. And most of their patients haven't a clue how bad the situation has become.

Increasingly aware of complaints from a restless medical community, we conducted two

polls. A mid-in survey sent to 3,500 family physicians across the country measured their attitudes toward their work. By telephone, we queried 1,600 patients nationwide on what they thought of family doctors and the care they're getting. The good news is that, across that divide, the two sides are in solid agreement that GPs are well as professional, skilled, dedicated and compassionate bunch. And who knew it going under the GYN sign, it hasn't stopped one out of 39 patients from rating their experience in the doctor's office as good or excellent.

But elsewhere the numbers tell a disturbing tale of decline, frustration and contrary perceptions. Almost a half of GPs believe the quality of care they give patients—the bottom line in their business—has worsened over the past tumultuous decade. Fewer patients, but still a significant one at five, feel the same way. As well, GPs are more than twice as likely as their patients to feel that doctors' working conditions, social status and job satisfaction have slipped during that same time. That huge level of discontent is discouragingly familiar to the doctors' professional associations—but not because physicians have lost their dedication. "Most doctors are telling

Almost a third of family doctors in our survey feel the quality of care they give their patients has worsened over the past tumultuous decade

Medical history says Canada now is 3,000 more family doctors—now

us it's not the work," says Dr. Robert Wedel of Taber, Alta., president of the College of Family Physicians of Canada. "The work is fine, it's the workplace."

The problem are fundamental and they're worsening, but there are ways to address them. Chief among them:

- **Produce family physicians.** The college says Canadian-born 27,000 qualified FPs, though not all are engaged in a traditional comprehensive family practice. And we need 3,000 more, it says, immediately. Start by bringing in overseas-trained doctors, but also increase medical-school enrolment and attract more grads into family medicine. Which leads to:

- **Improve working conditions, including pay.** Providing more doctors would relieve a lot of the burden, but provinces have to increase their fees to family physicians if they want to attract the best grads.

- **Provide more residency positions.** These in-hospital positions that are an essential part of a med-school grad's training have not kept up with demand. That, says the Canadian Medical Association, means young physicians are obliged to do their residencies, and then practice, in the United States.
- **Ease the human contribution.** With hospitals



Methodology | HOW THE SURVEY AND POLL WERE DONE

This report, prepared in partnership with The Medical Post, is based on a national telephone survey of 1,600 adult Canadians who have a family doctor, and a mail-out survey that went to 3,500 family doctors across Canada. National results of the phone survey, conducted by The Strategic Counsel from Sept. 10 and 11, are accurate to within 3.5 percentage points; 20 times out of 20. National results of the mail survey, based on

responses received by Oct. 14 from 350 doctors, and weighted to represent the actual distribution of family doctors, are accurate to within 4.2 percentage points; 19 times out of 20. In both cases, the margin of error is larger for results from subgroups within the national groups.

For highlights of the results of the survey and poll, see www.macleans.ca/andreportcard

20% of generalists say their responsibilities at their family doctor have worsened over the past decade. 25% of our respondents say that's the highest of any topic.

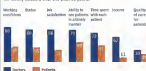
52% of family doctors say they wouldn't choose the same career if they had to do it all over again.

60% of family doctors say billing and paperwork takes up from 25% to 30% of their time. 25% say it's even more.

And just...
90% of patients say their experience with their family doctor is good or excellent.

THE PATIENT-DOCTOR DISCONNECT

Percentage who think these factors have worsened for family doctors over the past 10 years:



LOSING GROUND

How family doctors view the past decade

	IMPROVED	WORSENER
Quality of care for patients	23%	30%
Income	18	62
Time spent with each patient	4	72
Job satisfaction	4	80
Overall working conditions	4	86
Ability to see patients in a timely manner	2	76
Time spent on administrative matters	2	96

PERCENTAGE OF PATIENTS AND DOCTORS WHO FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE TYPICAL FAMILY DOCTOR IS...

	PATIENTS	DOCTORS
Professional	89	36
Skilled	76	77
Dedicated	73	75
Compassionate	67	71
Overworked	42	80
Rushed	26	36
Wealthy	26	3
Unfriendly	13	3
Underpaid	13	66

DOCTORS WHO FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE TYPICAL PATIENT IS...

	PERCENT
Trusting of their advice	53
Demanding	56
Respectful	40
Appreciative	48
Seeking alternative medicine	38
Well-informed	29
Impatient	20
Compliant	16
Misinformed	13

playing a smaller role in the overall picture since the mid-'90s, doctors need more computerized tracking of patients as they move from the hospital to their communities, where they'll need follow-up care.

- Provide more hospital beds and specialists to ease the amount of time GPs spend looking after patients waiting for the extra care
- Provide more home-care nurses
- Provide more support for group practices

VANCOUVER'S Dr. Wynne Su, 28, has practised for just a year and a half. She thinks it will be hard to get more students to follow her. "It's not something a lot of people aspire to," she says, "especially new grads." One cause of frustration among her peers is the time they spend doing everything but seeing patients. Notably, 60 per cent of GPs say billing and paperwork takes between 10 and 25 per cent of their workday—and two in 10 put that ratio even higher. "If you want to be a responsible family physician," says Su, "a lot of the time taken is not in the examining room. It's coordinating care, contacting other care providers and consultants, writing referral letters, following up on lab work."

"The doctor shortage, says Widel, has already left more than four million Canadians without a GP. That makes the workload for those in practice that much more onerous, particularly since the average age of GPs is now over 50. "If you look at the demographics of the Canadian public and the numbers of doctors we are producing, this is not going to get better," warns Widel. "In fact it's going to get worse."

A range of questions in our survey brings the story of bad feelings

'I'd love to see two patients per hour or so, but then I couldn't pay my mortgage'

—DR. PETER NICOLA, FAMILY PHYSICIAN, FORT MACMURRAY, ALTA.

among family doctors to the forefront noticeable. For starters, there's a strong sense of disappointment in their chosen vocation. Four out of five family docs feel their vision has diminished over the past decade. Fully half say their expectations going into the profession have not been met. What's more, given the opportunity, 52 per cent would choose another specialty or—their current dilemma notwithstanding—get out of medicine entirely.

ON A TYPICAL DAY, Dr. Peter Palamas, between 50 and 60 patients. The Fort McMurray, Alta., emergency room doctor, who also does clinic work, says the time he spends with each patient and the quality of care he provides have decreased significantly in the past 10 years. Part of the problem in Canada's aging population—older people tend to have more problems that require extra attention, leaving less time for other patients. "You have to see so many patients in order to make it lucrative because you're only paid so much per patient," says Palamas. "I'd love to see two patients per hour or so, but then I couldn't pay my mortgage."

Put in that perspective, it truly is remarkable



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GET BEHIND THE SHIELD



Big pay-off? **It says few doctors aspire to a family practice.**

MEDICAL MISGIVINGS

Family doctors who find their work is too taxing

15%

too demanding

18%

less satisfying than

they expected when

they started out

53%

More reasons family

doctors think lower

of their colleagues

are specializing in

general or family

practice

Make more in other

specialties

30%

Prefer a less stressful

lifestyle

25%

More administrative

demands on family

practice

22%

able how positively doctors respond when asked if they're satisfied with the work itself. Three out of four doctors say at least "somewhat," including an impressive 33 per cent who say "very" in B.C. and Quebec, satisfaction percentages are in the 80s. At the other end of the scale, at 68 per cent, in Ontario. That's where GPs are most likely to see a whole range of negatives in their jobs (page 45).

While money clearly is at the nose of a lot of doctor dissatisfaction, patients have a decidedly different take on the issue. Two-thirds of doctors think they're underpaid—just 13 per cent of patients say that's the way. And as long as doctors find their money isn't up to snuff, they'll feel pressure to take on larger caseloads—and have even less time for each patient—to bring in more income.

A national survey conducted for the College of Family Physicians in 2006 found the average GP working 32 hours a week (plus 17 hours on call), a two-hour increase over 1998. Statistics Canada reports that GPs and FPs, including part-timers, had an average net income of \$140,997 in 2006, compared to specialists' \$134,581, although the college considers these numbers high on the GP side, and low for specialists.

HERE'S ANOTHER CHALLENGE: For doctors, solid majorities of their patients don't buy

the notion that they're rushed and overworked. In fact, from respondent Gerald Swenson's perspective, doctors have it pretty good these days. "The ones I know now, they want a nine-to-five job," says the 64-year-old retired printer from Springfield, Mass., 30 km northwest of Winnipeg. "They get lots of time off, they work out of a clinic and they get holidays. There's nothing wrong with that, but it's a different world we live in now."

Whatever their pay and working conditions, doctors aren't much good if they're not accessible. And first out of the way their ability to see patients in a timely fashion has worsened over the past decade. Half of patients feel the same way, although the rest think accessibility has "stayed about the same" or even improved. Count Judy Mikulak, 39, among the frisky customers. She and her husband, Chester, farm near Glenora, Sask., 75 km south of Saskatoon. Getting in to see her GP in Outlook, 36 km away, has never been a problem. "We don't run to the doctor for any little cold," says Mikulak. "But when we're very ill, it's nice to be able to phone up the doctor and say, can we come up the next day?"

Many of the problems the doctors point to now are rooted in the drastic cuts of the mid-1990s. It's been hard on patients, and hard on the doctors. It's not that the doctors are against change, "total anarchy—as long as the requested tools are available. Information technology is the key," he adds. "It's one thing that's been shown to improve the connection between what happens in the community and in the hospital," he says. Now a few political signals and fanning hope. Ontario and the provinces may be close to agreement on setting up a national health-care council to assess how the multi-billion dollar system can be improved. And Paul Martin, the prime minister in waiting, has confirmed that the provinces will get up to \$2 billion in extra health-care cash—as long as Ottawa doesn't run a deficit. What disgruntled and discouraged GPs want now is a sign that some of that money will go toward improving their lot.

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UNDER PRESSURE

Especially in Ontario, family docs can feel 'like slaves and indentured servants'

FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS, Dr. Ralph Scardifio practised on his own as a family doctor in suburban Ottawa. In 2001, he made a difficult decision. Although he cared deeply about his patients, he'd concluded his job was bad for his health, psychic and financial. He felt chronically stressed working in a health care system ravaged by the cutbacks of the '90s. "Many family doctors feel like slaves and indentured servants trying to keep up on a treadmill that requires them to put more and more bodies through a mangled and mangled system," says Scardifio, now 65. "The government have cut and restricted us all into this mess."

Scardifio left family practice to spend the sunset years of his career as a medical adviser to the Canada Pension Plan in Ottawa. The time had come to take care of himself, he says, although he recognizes he left a lot of his 1,500 patients in the lurch. "I spent several months trying to find doctors to take on a few of them," he says. "Many were taken on, but just as many were left without a family doctor."

When caring people leave others to fend for themselves, it is a sign of despair. Such is the state of family medicine in Ontario particularly, in 2003. Across Canada, the Maclean's Medical/Fort poll uncovered deep dissatisfaction among family physicians, but nowhere more so than in that province. Almost six in 10 are less satisfied with their career choice than they'd thought they would be. Nearly two thirds believe their status has worsened significantly in the past 10 years. And then there's



Dr. Ralph Scardifio
wishes his patients
would be doctors in
the work's best field

money. Many are bitter that their professional body, the Ontario Medical Association, has not managed to negotiate higher fees for them. Only three per cent of Ontario family doctors say their income has gone up in the past decade—whereas in the country, that number is 18 per cent. “Ontarians all assume we’re millionaires,” laughs Judy Chow, 48, a family physician in Ottawa. “I find myself frustrated by the increased complexity of the cases I now deal with, and resentful when I hear how much the other specialists earn, and other professionals like the lawyers and dentists.”

In Kingston, Ont., Dr. Greg Benson, 55, says he’d be happy if he got paid more than a nurse practitioner. More than half of his gross earnings go to overhead. Doctors don’t get a pension or benefits. He works seven days a week. “I’ve had times when I felt so frustrated,” says Benson, “that I wanted to pack it in and do something else.”

Stagnant incomes are Micus in the wound for Ontario doctors. They’ve had a bad relationship with the government for two decades. A three-week province-wide doctors’ strike in 1996 left a cynicism “which persists to this day,” says Dr. Ron Milne, a family physician in Peterborough. A further blow came in 1994 when the province took back money that doctors had earned beyond a government-imposed income cap. Meanwhile, dramatic hospital restructuring and health-care layoffs, coupled with severe shortages of new family physicians, left a health system pelted to the bone. And as if that’s not enough, family doctors feel overwhelmed by paper work and bogged down by unpaid administrative work.

For all their discontent, Ontario’s family doctors don’t seem to be taking it out on their patients. Like their colleagues across the country, they give themselves high marks for compassion, professionalism and dedication—as do the patients.

“I’VE had times when I felt so frustrated,” says one Ontario doctor “that I wanted to pack it in and do something else.”

Family physicians make an impact on our patients’ lives. But the and her husband, David Burt, also a family physician, have constant reminders of the downside of their job. “I would love our children to be family doctors,” she says of her three, aged 15, 17 and 20, “but they don’t want to. They think we work too hard. Sad but true.”

One option that has eased the load for beleaguered family doctors across the country is joining a group practice—essentially, sharing duties with other family physicians. Dr. John Brewer is among the many who are joining group practices. A family physician in Saint John, N.B., who practiced solo until two years ago, Brewer, 44, now works with five other doctors at the Saint John Collaborative Care Unit. “We go to work with smiles on our faces,” he says—a far cry from the way he felt as he tried to be everything to everybody in his own practice. “I was on call for so many services—obstetrics, sexual assault, in-patient geriatrics, nursing homes, palliative care,” he says. “I had a heck of a lot of beepers.” Now beepers at the most on-beeper, “and I get to have supper with my kids,” he says. “We would all like to be Marcus Welby, but we can’t do it.”

Several versions of government-backed family health groups are available to physicians in Ontario, but so far doctors have been wary of their potential anodyne to their own work. The problem

ONTARIO'S GPs HAVE ISSUES

PERCENTAGE MOST
WISH TO SAY ...
O—continued

Saying a family physician is dissatisfied

34 (14)

Life in a family doctor is much less satisfying than they had expected

36 (15)

If they had to choose a career, none it would be outside medicine

25 (12)

The status of family doctors has significantly worsened over the past 10 years

82 (38)

Their status has decreased because of low income

39 (21)

Doctors can make more money in other specialties

48 (24)

Wages under no pay ... Their income has improved in the past decade

3 (3)

Quality of care they provide patients has improved in the past decade

35 (23)

once again their strained relationship with the provincial government. “While Brewer works, reform was mandated by parents and doctors.” “The government of New Brunswick is not forcing change,” he says. “Our whole project started in the community, and doctors walked out to the idea.” The difference in Ontario, says Brewer, is the perception that group practice is being promoted and encouraged by a government the doctors have come to mistrust. Far from being a grassroots movement, it’s seen as a top-down initiative, complete with a 50-page contract that many doctors feel gives the government too much control over their working lives.

Also critical of the health services concept is the Coalition of Family Physicians of Ontario, which claims a membership of 3,500, almost half of all practicing family doctors in the province. It’s urging doctors to hold out for more autonomy than the government is offering. Former premier Mike Harris didn’t help matters when he announced the concept in late 2000. He declared that that day the concept of the province’s doctors would be working as that form of group practice with other physicians and health professionals within two years. “That didn’t sit well with physicians,” says Dr. Cal Gorkin, executive director of the College of Family Physicians of Canada in Mississauga, Ont. “It sounded like a dare.” And three years later, the numbers illustrate the doctors’ hesitancy—27.6 per cent have signed up.

Dr. Brad Wilson, who oversees the shift into these practices as chair of the Ontario Family Health Network, is convinced the concept offers relief for overburdened doctors. But he understands their wariness. In other provinces, the move there appears to be greater support for group practice because it’s still at the stage of a theoretical concept. But in Ontario, “we’ve moved beyond theorizing and we’re in the implementation stage,” he says. “This is how you do it.” And sometimes when something is clear and defined, the choices are stark and people feel more constrained.

In Ottawa, Scandiflo is a case in point. Looking for a way to stay in family medicine, he tried to establish a group practice three years ago. But when the 20 doctors he’d assembled saw how much that 70-page contract would intrude on their lives, the plan floundered. “It had been a group practice I would have stayed on in a family doctor,” he says. “It’s a less Ontario can do effort.”



Women's heart attack symptoms differ from men's

Heart pain may be the hallmark of a heart attack in men, but new research shows the key warning signs in women are weakness and shortness of breath.

Women don’t always report these symptoms to their doctor because they attribute fatigue to getting old, or they somehow rationalize how they feel, researchers say. Even when women report these symptoms, they are often treated for depression or something else, and are rarely suspected of having heart disease.

Doctors need to check women for heart disease when they have unexplained fatigue and sleep disturbances.

The researchers surveyed 515 women four to six months after discharge from hospital following a heart attack. The



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FYI

Moderate exercise can lower blood pressure, according to an eight-week study of 207 sedentary adults published in the *American Journal of Hypertension*. The participants were assigned to one of five exercise groups. Working out for at least one hour each week prompted average declines of 12 mm Hg in systolic blood pressure and eight mm Hg in diastolic blood pressure.

(Source: Health After 50: the Johns Hopkins Medical Center)

most frequent warning signs experienced more than one month prior to the heart attack were unusual fatigue, sleep disturbance and shortness of breath. Only 30 per cent remembered experiencing chest discomfort. During the heart attack itself, women experienced shortness of breath, weakness and fatigue.

Blood test predicts rheumatoid arthritis

A new blood test may help predict the likelihood of developing rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in people with an unknown type of joint inflammation. The new test looks for specific antibodies found in the blood of people with RA.

Dr. Ellen van Gaalen, a researcher at London University Medical Centre in London, the Netherlands, says the new test could allow for earlier diagnosis and treatment of RA, perhaps helping to slow its progression.

Dr. Jason D’Ott, chief of rheumatology at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, agrees the test could prove to be an important new tool in the coming years. “The level is an evolving story and it is going to be

helpful to us in diagnosing rheumatoid arthritis with more accuracy earlier in the course of the disease and therefore being able to get people started on therapy.”



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RUSSIA'S POWER POLITICS

Opposition casts Putin as Czar Vlad going into parliamentary elections

IN MOSCOW'S art markets and souvenir kiosks, T-shirts, posters and paintings bearing the image of Vladimir Putin are lined up alongside traditional winter scenes and portraits of Red Square. This isn't kitschy propaganda. Compared to leaders in some other former Soviet republics, Vladimir Putin was overall as president of nearby Georgia last week—the Russian president has enjoyed remarkable popularity since his election in March 2000. In recent polls, 70 per cent of the Russians surveyed said they would vote for him. Last year, a pop song called *White Swans/Lake Putin* got regular radio play. When

Putin turned 50 last year, the entire country helped him celebrate. For many Russians, Putin, a former KGB agent, has been a refreshing change from the drunken antics of his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin. A technocrat and fitness buff, the president has provided the firm hand required for stability and prosperity. Although most Russians are still struggling, the economy has grown, thanks in part to high oil prices. And while the promises remain poor, Moscow, with its many restaurants and designer boutiques, is booming.

But Putin's song is off the airwaves now, and some fear that with the Oct. 25 onset of Russia's richest man, oil boss Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Putin's firm hand is turning into an iron fist. As the stock market trembles and discussions with big Western oil companies fail, Russian businessmen are getting worried. "It's not good that Khodorkovsky is in prison," said an older Russian lawyer, 33. "They went too far."

Khodorkovsky, who until his resignation following his arrest was head of Yukos, the country's No. 1 oil firm, was denied bail on charges of tax evasion and fraud and now is reportedly submitting through bread and olive poisons from home in a clemency Moscow prison. Russia's deputy prosecutor general, Vladimir Kolesnikov, warned he could remain behind bars for up to two years as the case progresses. That leaves journalists, businessmen and politicians at home and abroad to debate whether the Kremlin's move to single out one man among many, over a single debt conducted a decade ago, signals a shift toward authoritarianism in the fledgling democracy. Robert Amstutz, a Canadian lawyer who is on Khodorkovsky's defense team, suggested the pro-

secutor was acting as if he was above the law. "That," Amstutz added, "is a very serious sign to Russia and to the West for the future of democracy in Russia."

But in a country where old women have to beg on street corners to supplement pitiful pensions, and where state-paid doctors and surgeons are forced to take private deals to make and make, there isn't much sympathy for Khodorkovsky, whose wealth is estimated at US\$8 billion. He's one of a handful of multi-billionaire oligarchs who scooped up state-owned assets auctioned in controversial privatization deals in the

AS the stock market trembles and discussions with big oil companies falter, Russian businessmen are getting worried

1990s. Putin had kept control of this group through a tacit agreement to leave their businesses alone if they stayed out of politics. He hasn't been afraid to take them on individually: media tycoon Boris Berezovsky and Vladimir Gusinsky were ousted for losing their TV stations to criticize the president. But he picks his fights carefully: in a democracy as fragile as Russia's, the influence of these men, as a group, is enough to mount a formidable opposition.

Khodorkovsky, however, ignored the rule. While global giant Exxon Mobil and Chevron Texaco were bidding for his business, and with Yukos conforming to international accounting standards that gave the company added loans, he may have felt

untouchable. Ahead of the Dec. 7 parliamentary elections and a presidential election scheduled for March, Khodorkovsky criticized Putin publicly, donated to Duma opposition parties and was rumored to be considering a run for the presidency in 2008. Warnings—the July arrest of one of Yukos's key shareholders, Platon Lebedev, and searches of Yukos offices—did not silence him. Finally, Khodorkovsky was arrested on a Siberian railway while his private jet was on a refueling stop.

It now seems inevitable that his case will go to trial, which puts Putin in an uncomfortable position. With opposition newspapers carrying headlines such as "Capitalism with Stalin's Face," the Kremlin may have created in Khodorkovsky a political and economic martyr—one who may now be considering challenging Putin for the presidency in March instead of 2008. But to back down would make the Kremlin appear indecisive, a fatal error in a country where strong leaders are revered.

This isn't the only stain on Putin's record. Young Russian conscripts are still dying in the war in Chechnya, where fighting has continued for the better part of a decade. Suicide bombings and hostage-takings by Chechen rebels have moved the conflict into the capital. Mental disorders and suicide rates in large public gatherings are now routine. The Kremlin tried to enact a law restricting media reporting on candidates during the current parliamentary election campaign for seats in the Duma. But that law was struck down in October by the Constitutional Court because it infringed on freedom of speech, so as the elections near, opposition parties are fully exploiting Khodorkovsky's arrest as an effort to gain support.

Still, the United Russia party, which backs Putin, is expected to win. In fact, United Russia is so confident that it includes, internal Minister Boris Gryzlov, has and its members will not participate in televised debates because there are no serious rivals. "We have nothing to debate and no one to debate



with," he said. And Andrii Piontsevsky, head of the Moscow Centre for Strategic Studies, says Putin has nothing to worry about. "I don't think he really needs to boost his popularity before the parliamentary election," Piontsevsky says. "He'll

have no problem winning the election." Putin is riding no chances. The Duma's support is critical if he is to proceed with far-reaching economic reforms. So Putin's signature on pro-United Russia billboards all around Moscow. He also donated house at

Portraits illustrate Putin's popularity, but his run in with Khodorkovsky could hurt

the Kremlin, an effort helped when presidential administrators don't head Alexander Volodin, a lecturer from Yeltsin's "temple," assigned to protect the arrest of Khodorkovsky.

The reaction to the move against Khodorkovsky, though, clearly demonstrates the divide that still exists between ordinary folk and the wealthy bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. Many Russians, cynical about what to expect from government, are happy the Kremlin is going after an oligarch who, like some other leading businessmen, built his company by buying state assets at auctions that were often flawed. "Why does only one have to be arrested while the others go on stealing?" asked Alexei Saval, 30, a street vendor who says his major disappointment in Putin is that he's not doing more to combat corruption.

Though young Russians embrace capitalism, seniors tend to look fondly on the Communists, when there were no worries about the price of bread going up or making ends meet after retirement. Still, many are loyal to Putin, who has boosted pensions—not enough, but a hope—and stabilized inflation rates. One rocking her granddaughter on a swing in Moscow's Sokolniki Park, Anna Tsanova, 72, says there is one hope that her life may improve, so she'll support Putin in the presidential election in March. "I think what's happening is good," she says. "Everyone

isn't right when he's doing." Except, perhaps, those looking anxiously over their shoulders and waiting for the Kremlin's next move.

Carolynne Whiller is a freelance journalist based in Moscow.

CHEF BOY-OH-BOY

Food TV is giving rise to the unthinkable: teenage male gourmets

EVERY PARENT can tell you one: From baby's belly with the apple to the scourge of hush-ups, stories about our kids' eating habits unite us. We may not always know their favourite colours or TV shows, but we do know what they will—and, more important, will not—eat. It's privileged knowledge that can only be earned the hard way: from having prepared countless unshared meals.

So, some months ago, when my 13-year-old asked why I was keeping the red pepper-parsnips off his chicken breast, I could confidently reply, "because you don't like it" but in the first of a series of stunning reversals, Sam happily ate the sauced-up poultry. He's since downed just about everything we put before him. Even more amazing, he's taken to preparing one family meal a week. And we're not talking mac 'n' cheese. Tussho! He's concocted a pasta, a pizza-and-veal-meatball dish using 23 ingredients, it just one example from his growing repertoire.

The explanation for Sam's sudden metamorphosis? Television. The *Iron Chef* phenomenon: what we failed to do: expand his culinary horizons. It taught him that food can be fun and crazy. The first signs of this awakening came last winter, when Sam announced he wanted to cook schoolies using raspberries and pears, as he had seen on TV. He—or rather we (I'm part consultant, part sous-chef)—winged it.

Sure, it seems, it's on the cusp of a trend. And it's a phenomenon that's crossed the radar screens of at least some food industry types. In the six years since McCall's has been teaching kids to cook, he's noticed a significant gender shift. Clauses used to be evenly male or more girls than boys, says the director of Vancouver's *Cookschool at the Cookshop*. Now, "very often, boys are in the majority." While Toronto culinary



Sam's repertoire of complex dishes includes this foil-wrapped casserole

guru Bonnie Stern doesn't offer children's classes, she regularly gets calls requesting them—and many parents are looking on behalf of their sons. But the real proof is in the pudding or, in this case, pie. Top prize at November's annual Perfect Pie Contest in Winkworth, Ont., went to Tinsla Clarke, 14.

Stern and McCall's agree TV has a lot to do with this youthful surge of interest. Kels, says Food Network Canada's vice president of programming, Karen Gelbart, are a "smallish" but fast-growing percentage of its audience. Since the network's launch in 2000, teen viewers have jumped by 71 per cent. And boys are among the most ardent fans. When chef Kamel Lagasse went to Vancouver three years ago, recalls Gelbart, a 10-year-old boy who'd driven in from northern Alberta with his grandfather was moved to tears.

There's nothing unusual about guys becoming chefs, of course. What is news that male voices are all over the media—as sushi par-wildlife sex symbols. Alongside a recent Q&A with Ethiopian-born Manhattan restaurateur Yotam Ottolenghi, the *New York Times Magazine* ran an alluring photo of him, muscular chest visible beneath his open,

Nohu-style shirt collar. And TV goes like the Naked Chef's Jamie Oliver got rock star treatment—1,000 screaming fans showed up for his Toronto book signing last year.

Sam wouldn't be caught dead at such an event—unless it was *Aur* cookbook he was promoting. And who knows, maybe he'll write one eventually. For now, his culinary turn has benefits beyond the complex, delicious meals he lays before us. Suddenly, buying gifts for a teenage boy has become easier and, frankly, more enjoyable. This Christmas I'll mix into the shadowy shops that burn the latest PlayStation games for \$20 a pop, but I'll have more fun checking out the kitchen stores for sushi equipment and cookbooks. What brings are the great-old pleasure, though, is the time we spend together in the kitchen. Precisely at the age when kids tend to shut down levels of communication, Sam's cooking a world I understand, opening up a new space for us to connect in. And that makes chopping procuring while he threads the provolone even more enjoyable.

Now if only there was a *Tidy Your Room* Network.

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Film | BRIAN D. JOHNSON



THE SENSITIVE SAMURAI

Iron Tom goes looking for his inner warrior in a spectacular period epic

EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, it seems, Hollywood is turning Japanese. First there was *Last Samurai*, with Bill Murray staging karate in downtown Tokyo. Then came *Kick Ass*, with Uma Thurman as an assassin samurai who slices her way through a Japanese horde in a Japanese nightclub. Now it's Tom Cruise's turn. In *The Last Samurai*, a Yankee homage to Kurosawa, Hollywood's top gun goes to bushido: bare-chested and set out to prove that the sword is nobler than the no-shooter. This majestic period piece comes from Edward Zwick, who directed *Glory* (1989) and produced *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), and like those

two films, it gleams with Oscar pedigree. But its magnificent spectacle carries an ideological price: after all, it's the tale of an American war hero who redeems his genocidal guilt by serving as military quarterback for an army of freedom fighters in a foreign land. The time is 1863. Captain Nathan Algren (Cruise) is suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome. After helping decimate the Plains Indians, he's now a buffalo head punch-bawling Winchester milks, while using whiskey to blot out nightmarish memories of slaughtering innocent children (imagine a post-Vietnam drifter set in the 19th century). Algren is one step from the gutter when the Japanese emperor hails him to join Japan's first modern army of conscripts, marshaled to crush a samurai rebellion against Western values. As a U.S. adviser, Algren is off

officially a non-combatant (Japan, studies of Vietnam). But he fights like a tiger—and he's captured by samurai warriors and gagged off to a rebel village in the mountains. It's a Japanese *Shogun* (a, with radiant gestures and breathtaking views).

Instead of killing his prisoner, the samurai chief, Katsumoto (Ken Watanabe), chooses to train him. He teaches Algren with his sister, the lovely Taka (Kagaku), even though the American killed her husband in battle. As she tenderly sews up his wounds, and drenches him in alcohol, it's as if this strong-cut soldier has landed in a fantasy dream-cessation-Samurai. He bathes in hot springs and learns to appreciate the beauty of blossoms. Playing surrogate dad to Taka's children, he teaches them baseball, they teach him Japanese, and soon Tom is speaking with subtlety. During a winter of captivity, Algren struggles to master the Zen of swordsmanship,

he even releases his macho posture long enough to do a little kumono cross-dressing. In other words, Cruise becomes Iron Tom, the Sensitive Samurai.

Along with John Logan (Gladiator), Zwick co-wrote the script with Marshall Herskovitz—together they created *Star Trek: Voyager*, the '80s TV show that fashioned a template for a "new" post-feminist American male. With this tale of a man looking for his inner urbi al warrior, and inner peace, they're still trying to get it right.

Just last week I reviewed *The Mummy*, another movie about a white man who goes native and speaks subtitled dialogue. *The Last Samurai* is a more comprehensive picture. Cruise, an actor who performs like an eager athlete, rises to the challenge of a highly physi-

cal assignment. In the role, the charismatic Watanabe quietly steals the movie. And Timothy Spall makes the best of his stock character, a military colonialist.

The film's meticulous period details often distract from the action, but it's a pleasure to be so close to the beauty of pre-mechanized warfare—the arabesque beauty of the sky, the hawk-like scales of tribal armor. As the samurai army is torn to ribbons by history's first machine guns—early weapons of mass destruction—Zwick shoots the carnage as close-up as possible, a pageant of death. In an odd twist, Algren's samurai courage inspires Japan's young emperor, turning him from a weak man to a leader willing to stand up to the West—which sets the stage for the rise of Japanese imperialism. (In such a scenario the old glory of war, then in vogue, the movie never finds time to address.)



Watanabe (left) and Cruise teach Westerners and Zen ways in a samurai Shangri-la

VOILA, A HIT NOVEL

Once a Québecois best-seller reappeared in English, it really took off

GIL COURTEMANCHE can be excused for not fully believing, yet, what is happening to him. Not so long ago he was, to put it mildly, a has-been: an aging, ill-tempered, burnt-out left-wing intellectual and broke, too, after one fight too many with Radio-Canada cost him his job as a foreign correspondence in the mid 1980s.

Now, thanks to a curious book, a bit of luck and a timely government subsidy, Courtemanche, 60, is Canada's newest and brightest literary star. His first novel, *A Sunday at the Pool in Rigault*, first published in French in 2006, with an English version following earlier this year, is being translated into 14 languages and refused by the most prestigious publishing houses worldwide. But it has already generated royalties and advances in excess of \$400,000 so far. Courtemanche is just in from a whirlwind promotional tour in Europe, and is in Mexico this week. He's now a name in literary circles in Costa Rica, Democratic Sweden, Spain and Poland. The *Times of London* and the *New York Times* both gave him long, lavish reviews.

Courtemanche now enjoys a status that a lowly him-and-his-wife ID James in Edinburgh one night, then jet off to Melbourne, Australia where the Canadian ambassador treats him to an official dinner. "The diplomat used to run away from me, now they invite me," says the craggy-faced, heavy-smoking writer. "I feel like a kid opening gifts now."

The novel is a good read, at once an evocative story and a satire, politically toxic descent into the hell that was AIDS-plagued Rigault when the build-up to the horrible



Courtemanche was broke and burnt-out, and now he's an international literary star

hundreds genocide of 1995 was gathering momentum. But the story of how *Un dimanche à la piscine à Rigault* finally achieved international status is that of a long shot winning big—and a vivid illustration of the roadblocks that can await a Québecois novel in the international publishing world. "This is a Canadian book—it kept bouncing back



A Sunday at the Pool in Rigault (Knopf Canada, \$19.95)

when we expected it to break," says Pascal Asselin, head of Montreal's Editions du Boréal, which first published the book in the fall of 2000. Initial press run: 2,500 copies. "It is a good book," says Asselin, "but it is also a difficult book. Frankly, we didn't expect it to do much better." It did do better, much better, selling 40,000 copies in the province alone. But despite that success, it bombed at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2001. "We circulated copies [in French] everywhere," recalls Asselin, "but it generated little interest." No English, no deal.

But Louise Denerys, executive publisher of Knopf Canada, can read French, and she liked the book. She wouldn't, however, fork out all the cost of a translation. So Asselin applied for and won a \$18,900 grant from the Quebec government which

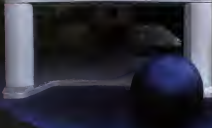
paid 70 per cent of the fee charged by Montreal translator Patricia Gosselin (Knopf provided the remaining 30 per cent). Then, armed with the English version, Denerys shipped copies of *A Sunday at the Pool in Rigault* to her publishing pals in New York and London. And poof! "The book was the talk of the fair," she says of Frankfurt in 2002. Asselin recalls that Boréal's booth "was surrounded by publishers from the world over, one building one another for the rights." Same book.

One of the lessons to take from all this is that at least some great books from Québec aren't getting the attention they deserve. "The quantity of translation of French books into English is appalling," Denerys observes. "We are living in a world in which countries are more and more closely linked, but there are fewer and fewer foreign-speaking readers in English publishing houses. We are at the mercy of that." Meanwhile, the publishing houses that do have readers able to assess French books are easily guarded toward production from France. "They are rarely in tune with what is being created here," Asselin says.

Reflecting on his global good fortune, Courtemanche concludes "Britain and Germany are the keys. If you have some success there, your book will be translated into all other languages." But, of course, the trick for him was to get translated into English first. The moral of that tale? It is possible for a French Canadian author to succeed internationally. But the road to success is much longer, and more tortuous.

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ALL DOLLED UP

Whether a baby or a fashion doll, you're nothing in Toyland this year unless you're fully accessorized

ACCESSORIZE! Accessorize! Accessorize! It's not just a fashion mantra—it's the *sine qua non* for today's doll manufacturers. Fashion dolls, of course, have lived by it ever since Barbies started flying off the shelves in 1959. But even for your child's infant dolls, the latest in beachwear, diaper bags and car seats is now *de rigueur*. In fact, two of the Canadian Toy-Testing Council's top picks this year are just that, infant doll accessories: the Baby Born jogging stroller and Baby Born mini-world (a sort of dollhouse

including modular "seasonal and collectible play environments"). And it's no coincidence that the only doll to make that list, Mattel's rapturously Midge, has a homegrown "accessory": a plastic new-born tuck-in her shell-shaped sunray, which in turn attaches magnetically to her otherwise trim and perfect midriff!

Kids love to play with accessories. Four-year-old Nicole Logothetis from Stoney Creek, Ont., is a good example. Her mom, Melissa, says that she works into a corner with at least two Barbies, "start a conversation, changes their outfits and puts them on horses." Calgary's Claire Bellini, also four, does much the same, only her Barbies prefer motoring to horseback riding. And she sometimes introduces her infant dolls to the action. It's the "big morning," says her mom Anne Bergan, "because it's so tall."

Playing with accessories and role playing (especially nursing), says consumer executive director Leigh Peiner, are the two things kids most often do with dolls. In fact, the secret to Midge's success may well lie in combining those. Similarly, popular infant-doll lines like Zapf Creation (Baby Chou Chou, Baby Born) and Canale work both angles. Younger children, says Peiner, love to use functional accessories like cribs and strollers that are part and parcel of caring for babies. But nurturing can take a back seat. For senior dolls, the points simply to collect them. Polly Pocket, Strawberry Shortcake and Groovy Girls—and their countless accessories—are true annual must-haves that remain hot sellers in Canada this year. In recent years, the logic of accumulation is built right into their names: this holiday season, Diva is *vogue* as Groovy Girls Dolphin, Dancin' and Dancin' make their debut.

Not that parents appear to balk at forking over the money. Although the Canadian Toy Association can't break down what proportions of the \$1.45 billion seasonal toy market goes to dolls and

CHOU CHOU AND HER STUFF

- 1 Chou Chou on the go \$24.99
- 2 Back-a-bye Chou Chou, with basic wardrobe \$45.00
- 3 Chou Chou clothing \$14.99
- 4 Accessories, including a car seat, a stroller, and a changing backpack.
- 5 Younger kids love to use functional accessories that are part of caring for baby.

accessories, the dollar amount is clearly significant. Peter Emery, owner of Vancouver's Toybox, estimates it amounts to a significant part of his business. He expanded his doll section two years ago, partly because of the high demand for Groovy Girls, which entered the market in 1998. Their continued appeal, says Lili Skamnis, owner of Toronto's Treasure Island Toys, is particularly impressive given that their maker, Manhattan Toys, doesn't advertise or demonstrate them in Canadian mass-market

stores. Her take on it? "They're friendly, accessible" (\$14.99) and—big surprise—"masses of accessories," she says, picking up the Girl's new pet, Stratus Kittens, a feline trio snuggled into a faux-fur basket that sells for \$12.99.

Canadian buying habits have also spoiled the interest of Sandra Crawford, president of Orlando, Fla.-based Zapf Creation (U.S.) Inc.: Since reintroducing infant to high-volume stores in 2001, she says, Zapf has experienced "triple-digit growth," much of it because vetting out counterfeits south of the border are snapping up the econominer, at a rate of 2.1 per every doll sold. "Canadian consumers," she adds, "are more advanced. They understand the expanded play pattern" that go along with accessorizing dolls.

Well, aren't we smart—savvy consumers who'll drop \$49.99 for the Barbie of Swan Lake unicorn carriage, sure to top with hush this

season. More advanced than those Scandinavians, the Americans, who can't appreciate a doll baby stroller with adjustable straps or a pink plastic kitchen set? But our neighbors to the south aren't immune to accessorizing fever. In recent years, U.S. girls have been gaga over the pricey (\$88.44 each), Mattel-owned American Girl line, sold in Chicago and New York City stores devoted to that franchise alone. Not only can they buy American Girl coaching doll-own clothes, but they can take their diminutive friend for afternoon tea, to a hair salon or to doll hospital.

Critics have long bemoaned the narcissistic messages dress-up dolls send to girls (yes, 31 years after Mario Thomas released *William's Doll*, a hit song about kids who make a doll-loving boy, the world of doll-makers heavily gendered). And those concerns are still well-placed. While Barbie may now come with a variety of post-graduate degrees, her body aesthetically hasn't changed in 44 years—most modifications are the equivalent of 29.18 33, but in response to criticism Mattel in 1996 made one version a little less buxom and increased seven more disturbing, current seems to be the last thing on the minds of the now-called hip-hop dolls, such as Mafie's Hava line, nudged into development earlier this year after the runaway success of MG's Bionline line. The multi-racial Hava and Bionline dolls are way more into hair care, boys and navelgazing than jobs, sports or school.

Then dolls are among the latest "contemporary" to use a term coined by Cheryl Langer, a Canadian-trained sociologist now at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. Instead of "gender" traits, dolls and building blocks, she says, "they have been incorporated into a fashion cycle" that promotes specific brands, their characters and

accessories. As a result, your child has to have Barbie's Lego or pregnant Midge this year—another Lego or fashion doll won't do. Just as adults "might have a wardrobe full of clothes but have nothing to wear," the dolls, "a child might have a toy box full of toys, but nothing worth playing with—nothing that can be taken to school without feeling embarrassed." What's more, the accompanying catalogues showcasing an endless array of add-ons make the toy itself seem somehow incomplete. They may be lots of fun and even educational, says Langer, but "there's always something you don't have and it doesn't matter how much you've got, you can always get more." She worries that the constant cycle of desire and boredom, along with heavy-handed marketing, teaches kids "from a very early age that things you want have to be had now, and that however deeply attached to certain toys you might be for a period of time, they'll go out of style." It sends a message, she adds, that life and happiness are about consuming.

Langer points to the broader societal implications of overfocusing on toys as well. Not only is the toy industry "one of the worst" offenders in terms of labour practices (the Hong Kong Christian Industries Committee's 2004 report singles out Hasbro, Disney, McDonald's and Mattel), but as toys and accessories from years past end up in the trash, they also pose an environmental threat.

"The concept of the 'consumed toy' is to some extent a reality in the La-

FLAWA The hip-hop dolls are into fast cars, the opposite sex and social life... \$14.99

PREGNANT MIDGE She has a homegrown accessory: a newborn tucked into her tummy. \$29.99



gorithmic household. While Nicole's older cousins introduced her to Barbie, now it's TV ads, store displays and cross-promotional marketing like Barbie's Swire Lake rides that cue her into trends. "She wants all the stuff, now," says Melissa. And while mom holds fast, telling her daughter to wait for a "special occasion," Nicole already owns some 30 dolls. But her two-year-old sister, Leighton, is more oblivious to marketing. She doesn't notice on-brand-name infant dolls. Nor does she crave fancy accessories. She cradles her dolls, wraps them up in a blanket, and deposits them in a crib or stroller. Clothes, says Melissa, are optional. But that's a voice of innocence at parents' and doll marketers' knees: you'll have forever.

Concerns about fashion dolls—coupled with the fact that very young girls are playing with them—Claire and Nicole both start at asking for them at two—has provoked a bit of a backlash. Calgary's Hergen says her feminist principles have relaxed since she became a parent, as part because she sees how Claire uses the accessories to "have adventures." Still, she's introduced a couple of Get Real Girls into her daughter's collection. The Get Real line was developed by Julie Chavez, a former Mattel employee who left the company after realizing her more true-to-life design wasn't going to see the light of day there. The reasonably figured and sensibly dressed dolls do things like play soccer and dream of becoming a veterinarian.

That same commitment to realism, along with a desire to facilitate playtime, led Kathryn Gallagher Morton to create the high-end (\$499.99) Mapleles Girls. Modelled on one real Canadian girl, and fashioned by a Canadian artist, the first four characters, introduced in October, hail from towns and cities across the country. They're sold with a journal that not only reflects upon the dolls' "lives," but leaves space for their owner to do the same. Gallagher Morton, president of *Amelia Traditions*, hopes her dolls—unlike fashion dolls that, she believes, make growing up seem more glamorous than being young—help kids realize that "their lives are important, and worthy of a story too." Of course, kids will always make their own stories, and with any prop that's available, be it a stick, a toilet paper roll or a third-hand Barbie. But that's not a message doll manufacturers and marketers necessarily want parents to hear.



Often, kids don't appreciate Canada Savings Bonds until much later. Unless, of course, you give them in a really big box.

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TOY-RIFIC

Amid the mean, too lean and make-you-scream items, some stellar gift options

Dear Santa Claus,

I've just received the holiday letter I wait for each year, in which I asked you to kindly assist the hapless Rapunzel, Chicken Dinner Elmo and those peace-on-earth-be-damned Zeos boys Spinecrapper, Wir Sherk and Zuber Bing. Now the festive season is upon us again, and again, Santa, you've done me wrong: Elmo is back with an especially grating version of the hokey-pokey. Barbie has been surgically enhanced into a winged Odette from *Swan Lake* (she doesn't dance, but her wings light up and flap). Spinecrapper, Wir Sherk and Zuber Bing have once more taken up battle positions in the Middle East... oops, I mean Boyland.

As you'll have guessed, I won't be tying a ribbon around those abject and grunting items under any Christmas tree. I am begging, though, that this bird-beaked Barbie and Elmo the abominable will be among the hottest toys this season. Happily, there are other options. While browsing store shelves I've spotted a number of toys and games that offer tons of stimulation, but aren't so crunchy-granola as to slump on delight. These are gifts kids won't get bored with after a few days. So, thanks for that, and happy holidays to you, the Mrs. and the elves. A present

SURPRISE CIRCUS CHIEFS, 1 to 4, \$29.99

Simple, colorful and fun, the four wagons with pop-up circus performers can be stacked or made into a train.



VIKINGS

Playmats, 4 and up, \$29.99 for longboat and crew, \$29.99 for sea serpent and one Viking. The longboat rolls and floats, the figures and details are rich and colorful, and the imaginative-stimulating component is huge. There are many smaller packages like a two-horse cart and three Vikings. And you can sew up the longboat with a sequined undercoat, too!



K'NEX FORTS ROLLERS

K'NEX, 5 to 7, \$33.98

K'NEX MUSICAL FORTS WHEEL

K'NEX, 8 and up, \$35.48

This brightly colored construction system comes in many variations and levels of difficulty. The new *Roller* rollers, which comes in a jiffy red case, includes 71 pieces and allows kids to build a wacky amalgam of machine and sentient being. The motorized roller wheel, which stands a wee bit tall and can also be adapted into two other carousel-like features, evokes an abundance of magic.

B'STYLW! BUTTON DESIGNER Sander, 8 and up, \$24.99

LEGO CLIMBS Laps, 4 and up, \$4 and up

LEGO CREATION SYSTEM Matrios, 5 and up, \$5.99 to \$89.99

The popularity of building kits and other activity gifts for girls has given birth to a new genre, the fashion/decor craft kit aimed at young females. Some girls will build stuff with various sewing systems, and they'll love doing so. But the make-petty ethos does capture a lot of them early on. With *B'stylW!*, girls can make their own buttons using a variety of provided designs. *Clubs* are Lego's system for decorating frames, jewelry, hair clips, pillows, etc. And *Elo* is both a construction toy and a way to make jewelry and other crafts.



CARCASSONNE, 3 to 6, \$19.99

Gobblet Junior and Gobblet

Blue Orange Games, 5 and up/7 and up, \$30-\$40

SIMILARUS Matrios, 4 to 7, \$35

DANCE TO DREAM public Enterprises Ltd., 12 and up, \$49.95

Games are enjoying a resurgence, and these are some of the swiftest newcomers this year. Carcassonne and Gobblet are vigorous variations on matching games and board games respectively. *Similarius* works on memory skills, while *Dance to Dream* plays on fantasies of winning the lottery.

KEY TRAIN 6 to 8, 3 and up, \$19.99

The bang-car concept is a fresh, colorful reinvention of the toy train.



FLAMMABAR playmats, 3 and up, \$29.99

Call it the miracle car: no pedals, no batteries, but it moves—by leveraging the forces of inertia, centrifugal force, gravity and friction. All a child has to do is move the steering wheel.



GROWING

GROWING GARDEN

Globe Creativity for Kids, 7 and up, \$25

Children may not "get" the clever, tactile-like graphics on the box, but they'll love the fun, wacky update on the *Grow Pet*, in which roll grooves grow out of a "rigid" the child makes and disappears beneath.



MATCHBOX MAGNA WHEELS FIRE STOMPER

Mattel, 3 and up, \$24.99

There's a whole line of compelling rescue toys in the Matchbox line, and this one—with magnets connecting the various components—can be transformed into all the fighting vehicles. It includes a 10-on ladder and a movable light bar with red lights and siren.

LITTLE TOUCH LEAPFROG LEARNING SYSTEM Leapfrog, 6 to 36 months, \$69.99

LEAPSTART LEARNING TABLE

Leapfrog, 6 months and up, \$69.99

PRETEND & LEARN SHOPPING CART

Leapfrog, 2 and up, \$79.99

Leapfrog, the successful manufacturer of interactive, educational toys, expands its line with three appealing products. The *Little Touch Leapfrog* teaches some basic skills by going with baby's interest to get his hands on exciting images. A variation on an established toy, the *Learning Table* is animated by lights and music. Leapfrog's shopping cart, meanwhile, lets two little ones battle love of pushing carts and rollers, and their sponge-like ability to absorb information about colors, numbers and food.



MY FIRST CHEMISTRY KIT

Sale white, Explorer, 4 and up, \$29-\$29.99

This kit comes from a company that

exists to make science fun for kids. It includes everything you need to learn about science. It's a great way to learn about science. It's a great way to learn about science. It's a great way to learn about science.





MODERN-DAY PICKPOCKETS

They stole my credit card number and brought back bitter memories

WHEN I WAS 14 years old, one evening at the mall I opened a Ralph Lauren woolies baseball-style jacket. The fabric was rich and textured—a midnight black body with five-engine red stripes and a tiny polo logo to match. When my mom finished helping me into the coat she stood back and grinned ear to ear. She loved it too. “Le lo,” she declared in Hindi—let’s get it. In a flash, the jacket was off my back and on the counter. The price was more than \$300 and I knew we were overextending ourselves. But I think my mom recognized that in an awkward East Indian kid attending high school in one of

Western’s most proper and reformist family who adults, the jacket was taken to cool. I left a foot taller as I walked to my locker the next morning. I slipped the jacket over a metal hook and headed to class. When I returned at lunchtime, my heart sank as I discovered my contribution lock in four mangled pieces on the floor.

The jacket was gone.
Anger. Nerve damage? The head of missing money you can’t shake off for days. My dad helped me file a police report but they never did catch the bad guys.

Fast forward 14 years and I’m still a good capitalist citizen. And now, I have credit. Like most Canadians, I’m engaged in a love affair with my plastic. According to a recent report released by the Canadian Bankers Association, there are more than 46.4 million credit cards in circulation in the country. That’s a staggering increase from the 25 million in circulation 10 years ago. These numbers aren’t surprising when you consider some of the curious that financial institutions dangle in front of us: loyalty rewards including travel, interest-free balances and retail discounts. Not to mention an army of over 600,000 Canadian retailers who couldn’t care less how we pay.

I recently received a surprise phone call from my credit card company. “Mr. Khanna, I was wondering if you could verify some information for us,” said the entirely pleasant gentleman on the other end of the line. “Have you been winning a lot of money recently?” No. “Made a couple of big purchases at

Winnipeg?” God no. “Shoppers Drug Mart?” Negative. About 20 minutes, 20 transactions, and more than \$2,000 later, the voice informed me that it appeared someone had produced a duplicate copy of my credit card. Not to worry, though—I was protected by a consumer zero-liability policy, as are all VISA and MasterCard customers.

My starting card, still tucked safely in my wallet, was cancelled. While I waited for the new card to arrive, I was definitely inconvenienced—forced to use debit transactions

forced credit card companies and police to take various steps in dealing with these organized criminals. The paperman has the tech savvy to capture the information on the magnetic strip of a credit card when it is swiped at a gas station or a restaurant, or wherever the card leaves the consumer’s view. The info can then be sent anywhere in the world with the click of a mouse. A fake card is manufactured in Tony Soprano’s basement and he either sells it to other thugs or buys his wife some Cartier.

The bank’s most powerful weapons to battle these guys are “neural networks,” says Macneil. That’s fancy talk for a collection of hardware and software that monitors individual consumers’ spending patterns. The system learns how I spend, where I spend, and how much I spend. If, for example, my account suddenly starts showing transactions

in Hong Kong, the system will flag that unusual activity. And I get a call. In my case, the card was being used almost exclusively in north and west Toronto.

Law enforcement has also stepped down. “We’ve seen a number of arrests and seizures Canada-wide at a high level in the crime unit,” says Gord Jurek, director, risk and security, VISA Canada. He’s a former RCMP officer who was led in payment card related crimes.

In Jurek’s experience, the funds generated are often used as seed money for other criminal behaviour.

All these measures have reduced this sort of fraud, but it still occurs plenty often. So check your statements carefully every month in case the neural networks let you down. “Treat your card like a puppet,” says Macneil. And remember: “They’re not hitting you over the head and taking your credit card—but it’s still there.”

Sumit Khanna of Toronto has not yet recovered his new credit card number. To contact: overtop@torstar.com



and make repeated visits to bank machines. I signed and returned every “statement of fraudulent usage” the bank sent me. But unlike when the violation hit me like a ton of bricks as I opened my best-up locker 14 years ago, this time it took a while for the anger to register. And truth be told, I was impressed that my bank figured out something was going on.

I got in touch with White Macneil, president of MasterCard Canada, to get some insight into how financial institutions are doing the new breed of bad guys. In the 1990s, interest losses due to fraudulent activity

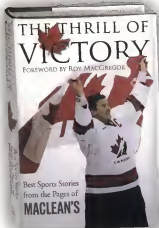


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CLOSINGNOTES



People | Swapping his light sabre for a pen and paper

When the world first took notice of Hayden Christensen, George Lucas's pick for young Darth Vader, the Thousand, Ont., actor was prone to giving serious, being interviewed. Now that he has a few more movies, and good reviews, under his Jedi belt, he is more easy-going and fun to talk to. And now playing Stephen Glass—a young *Nine* magazine journalist who fabricated elements of more than 27 articles—in the new movie *Shattered Glass*, Christensen, 22, has found a common interest with those sent to write about him.

"While Christensen was researching the role, he visited the *Montreal Gazette*. "I wanted to get a feel for the bureau," he says. "Also I wanted an idea of the sense of uni-

versity in his latest role, Christensen plays a disgraced journalist.

"When I first started going on auditions I was hesitant to be really nice."

tion. It's more prominent than I expected." In the movie, Glass is a star-caster to get ahead, but he does so by hiding his ambition and being a helpful and likable guy around the office. "He was a unique case man," says Christensen. "He was a bit of an introvert and had a hyper apologetic attitude."

If being personable was part of Glass's act, it comes naturally to Christensen—so much so that in the past he tried to suppress that aspect of his character. "When I first started going on auditions," he says, "I was hesitant to be really nice. I wanted to feel that I earned the role by doing the best work—I never wanted it because they liked me." But they do.

SHAMKA DEBIL

LISTINGS

Diana, A Celebration
Dec. 18, 10 p.m.
Only hours after *Biana, Princess of Wales*, died in 1997 following a car crash in Paris, flowers and heartfelt messages from people all over the world began to pour in to Kensington Palace. In all, more than 75,000 letters and cards were received at the royal residence while more than 26,000 notes and other tokens of grief for the "people's princess" were collected at St. James's Palace.

Now, some of those touching tributes, along with other artistic memorabilia, will be on display at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre in Toronto, as *Diana, A Celebration* makes its North American premiere. The exhibit consists of more than 150 pieces, including home movies from Diana's childhood. Also featured is her wedding gown and some 25 dresses she wore at public engagements.

The memorial, which has been on view every summer in England for the past six years, is expected to draw about 200,000 visitors while in Canada.

www.diana.celebration.com
Toronto





John Ninian starts a sentence ... Diana Gabaldon finishes it

It's nearly impossible to get a word in edgewise with Diana Gabaldon. The best-selling *Scout's Honor* author, a star horoscope and—writes a male inmate. She's a long-winded when trying to make farm fiction—her recently released *Lord John and the Private Matter* is a 308-page short-story collection. 51, recently finished Maclean's Research Reporter John (Ninian) sentences:

SEEDING MY BOOKS IN THE ROMANCE SECTION ... informs me. I don't have a problem with good romances. It's just that I don't write women's fiction. Some stores have even put *Lord John* in the romance section. It's a historical mystery with a gay protagonist, for goodness' sake. There's no love story and no even any hints at sex.

I OWN ... two Jane Austen desert romances. When I give them a crack, they chase it down—by the way, watching a romance run is very funny—they eat it and then offer

brave by having sex in the corner. **VOICES IN MY HEAD** ... have always been there. I call it the other side. Writing is like walking beside a big field with a lot of interesting people doing fascinating things. But between me and them is a plastic sheet. In some places it's clear, while in others it's like a garbage bag in the way and I have to feel solitary hands to get their messages.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. **Playful the French** from the *Historical* Archives University marching band.
2. **Who is the new** for *multitasking* 'productive' foreign cruise projects.
3. **Write as a article** before to clean a long-term travel and use as descriptions.

Books | Now you see it, now you don't

Kerry Greenwood was a fan of the *Agatha Christie* mystery, according to the *Agatha Christie* author of *Agatha Christie* (Mantel). Working the greatest escape artist of all time to display the same dramatic aspects of a mystery was "a lot like watching a writer play the role of 'Agatha Christie' as if it was a book pulled off a truck still barely damaged in the small world of professional magazines before 5,000 people in New York's *Agatha Christie* theatre he made a 2,700 kg. *Agatha Christie* novel. It was one of the great moments of major's Golden Age, which also featured the first recorded party go to in half an hour (1975), and the many thousands of *Agatha Christie*, the model for the original *Agatha Christie*. What made for all the sensational events were advances in optics and psychology achieved by 19th-century illustrators through means ranging from scientific study to applying one another. Greenwood's captivating cultural history, complete with diagrams, shows how they did it all.



Best Sellers

Fiction

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. THE IN BETWEEN WORLD OF VIKTORIA LEE , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 10. THE ART OF THE NOVEL , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
| 2. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 11. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
| 3. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 12. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
| 4. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 13. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
| 5. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 14. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
| 6. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 15. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
| 7. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 | 16. THE WAY THE WORLD FELS , by R. L. Stine (D) 1 |
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Non-fiction

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Christopher Isherwood—multi-talented financier and philanthropist, Olympic athlete and knight—is best first to say he's "not the writer" his younger brother **Walter** is, the better to prompt critics who might say "I'm here, but certainly a different writer." **Stan Mitchell**, the award-winning author of *The English Patient* and *East of Eden*, that is, of Christopher's non-fiction books are remarkable works of their kind, subtly interwoven travel, history and biography. **Godard's** newest, *Runaway in Alaska* (Griffin), is perhaps his finest, combining Isherwood's scholar-like prose of the famed journals of the 1950s century with atmospheric discursive into production's new life.

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Contrasting the markers and lifestyles of the incredibly rich and fabulously sheltered, CTV's hit run of America's funniest videos shows back to back starring Doc. 2. This gifted poked home a double-lashed bludge begins with *Neoflydies*. Nick and Jenna, which documents marriage from the perspective of pig-eyes Nick Lachey (Formerly of 94 Degrees) and Jessica Simpson (the poor woman's Britney Spears) live in a \$4,900-a-month house near Los Angeles. Nick is an empathetic spouse, underdog misappreciated by his dirty wife. Her blunders—often being refused to order: Buffalo wings because the doesn't eat buffalo—are more humorous than embarrassing.

By contrast, *The Simple Life* is brutally cynical. Infamous sociolite on the party circuit, Paris Hilton (the noble hotel heiress whose homemade sex tape recently set the entire Internet ablaze) and Nicole Richie (daughter of Lionel, Mr. All Night Long) leave Los Angeles to live with the farmers.

Pickle and Hilton are down on the farm

poor in Arkansas. The girls try to be good but are unsuccessful by the end of the first episode. Nicole has already joked about revealing their host family's son in a three-week. Goody-Clips from upstoring installments—the girls serving burgers, doing farm chores, Nicole with her arm stuck up above's behind—are entertaining, but audience sympathies will lie with the family. They look like they've been visited by a plague. In truth, they have.

JENNIFER K. GORDON

JONATHAN GURBY

Air-Guitar in College (Dwyer, Dec. 6, 2009, 3)

Those who can, do. Those who can't, play air guitar. And those who've perfected the art of picking an inoffensive note for the air guitar world championships in Gulu, Finland. This documentary follows a Finnish enthusiast, the much-maligned Andrew Rudkin (right), who could touch even the most hardened of music snobs - few things about the joys of instrumental rock.





STUFF'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN

Everyone in Ottawa is awaiting change. No one knows what it will bring.

"IT'S A STRANGE TIME," an Ottawa Liberal MP said. "People kind of feel, 'Wow, all this stuff's gonna happen, right?' But they don't know what's gonna happen."

Presumably, a new prime minister is about to take office. He will face a new, intrigued Conservative opposition. A strong new New Democratic leader is already campaigning for what everybody in Ottawa expects will be a spring election.

Everybody expects me. Just in case I'm wrong, I called a few dozen MPs from every party and asked what the mood is. The answer in that everybody expects some stuff to happen

They just aren't sure what

While they wait to find out, many continue to do their jobs. Paul Martin is being as good as his word when it comes to letting MPs discuss big decisions before he makes them. The Liberal caucus plans to hold a two-day retreat on Dec. 3 and 4, then an other brief meeting for Dec. 10, and a final session on Jan. 8 to brainstorm for a new Throne Speech. Mark Sykes plans to use the meetings to give his boss an earful.

Working as the MP for Sydney-Victoria in Nova Scotia, a veggie could foresee by now that he has

nothing to take care of and he's chairman of the Commonsense Committee, so he has about a big slice he wants to push forward. He lined them up: cleaning up environmental hot spots, especially his neighborhood; Sydney Tax Payers; Aid to Africa; Relations with Muslim countries; Improving relations with the Americans. "I had Paul Cellucci [the U.S. ambassador] up to Cape Breton twice this summer. There's some big stuff. You know what a collywog is, don't you? [Yes, it's a winged pterodactyl.] Played some golf too."

A lot of Liberals are passing grooves into the floorboards, waiting to find out whether they get into Martin's cabinet. "There's all kinds of silly jockeying going on," Dylis said. Like every Liberal MP these days, he wasn't old and not preoccupied with a cabinet job. Unlike some, he sounded credible.

The world's Martin wants everything change. New faces. Lots of promotions for backbenchers, then? One Ottawa Green is sleep-



ing. "If he's looking for new faces, why would he look at us? Most of us have been there for more than a decade. He's going to look outside."

An MP who has not in John Chretien's cabinet wonders what it'll be like to see as many as 30 ministers demoted. "At least until the election, you'll have 30 people in the back bench who know the business better than the current ministers. That'll be interesting."

It "change" even the night message for Martin? This MP isn't sure. "You gotta be careful with that. Ron Campbell said she was no Mulroney and people said, 'You're right.' John Turner said he was no Trudeau and people said, 'You're right.'"

Which brings us to the election. Few in any party expect Martin to crash. Many may regret him being only to contain the damage he might inflict on the ballot box. "Someone's been able to play the great regional card of being able to say, 'I wasn't

there,'" is frustrated Prairie New Democrat said. "Putting the worst of the Chrétien years online is going to help, even when it's used for the best of the Chrétien years."

That NDP might also grow usage from the plight of Dennis Mills, the Liberal in Toronto-Danforth. "I'm facing an uphill battle against the leader of the NDP [Jack Layton] and the Toronto Star, which is supporting the NDP," Mills said. "So I'm in tough." The Star's support of Layton's NDP is no more than a rumour, but it has Ontario urban Liberals spooked.

Odd friends like in Star-NDP alliance will play a big part in the coming campaign. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba, New Democrats are worried that the new grand chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Phil Fontaine, is putting the humble Aboriginal vote behind the Green.

And a surprising number of Conservatives are kind of sweet on Layton. "Jack Layton is the best NDP leader for us," an Alberta Alliance MP said. "The worst leader for us would have been Bill Blaney. 'Why?' On the Prairies, a surprising amount of Reform/Alliance support comes from working class Prairie voters who once supported Tommy Douglas's NDP. Layton can't take that vote back, or so the betting goes. In urban Ontario, meanwhile, higher support for Layton's NDP will come at the expense of the Liberals—allowing Conservatives to pick off some seats."

Looks like the Conservatives will need the help. You would be amazed at how little fear the new Conservative party evokes in the hearts of its opponents outside Alberta. Everyone assumes Stephen Harper will win the leadership. Everybody respects his intelligence. Most expect lots of Tories to defect and vote Liberal.

That's the news from home on ridings across Canada. Expect it all to change. There's some stuff about to happen. I just don't know what.

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